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7th plenary meeting
Friday, 16 September 2005, 9 a.m.
New York

Co-Chairperson: El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba ..... (President of the Gabonese Republic)
Co-Chairperson: Mr. Göran Persson ..... (Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 9.10 a.m.

Organization of work

The Co-Chairperson (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Before giving the floor to the first speaker, I should like to draw the attention of members to a draft resolution, which has been issued as document A/60/L.1, entitled "2005 World Summit Outcome". Members also have the correct version of paragraph 60 (a) in English only; the correct version will appear in the other official languages in the final document. With regard to document A/60/L.1, I should also like to draw the attention of members to a statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, issued as document A/60/355. Those two documents have been circulated to delegations this morning and have been distributed in the Hall.

Addresses on the occasion of the High-level Plenary Meeting (*continued*)

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): I should like to draw the attention of members to the fact that the meetings of the General Assembly for the past two days have extended far beyond the scheduled time. As members are aware, for this morning's meeting we have 40 speakers inscribed on the list and for the afternoon meeting we have 44 speakers. Also, during the afternoon meeting, the Chairpersons of the four round-table sessions will present orally the summaries of their respective round-table sessions. Thereafter, the General Assembly will take action on draft resolution A/60/L.1.

In order for us to conclude our work at a reasonable hour, I do not see any other alternative than to ask members to honour the agreed-upon time limit of five minutes per statement. Yesterday, several speakers presented abbreviated versions of their sometimes-long written statements. That is certainly a method of work that we would encourage. In order to help speakers facilitate our work, we shall remind them after five minutes have elapsed that they have exceeded the time limit. We hope that the statements will then be concluded promptly. I thank members for their cooperation, which is in the interests in concluding this meeting at a reasonable hour. Such cooperation is highly essential for the success of this High-level Plenary Meeting.

The Co-Chairperson (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Nicanor Duarte Frutos, President of the Republic of Paraguay.

President Duarte Frutos (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I congratulate the Co-Chairpersons on their well-deserved election. Their outstanding records guarantee the excellent guidance of this summit, which Paraguay hopes will produce results that enable us to make significant progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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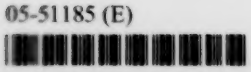

Today, more than ever before, we need effective action that will reduce the inequalities of development and lead to greater investment by more developed nations. Our peoples, with emerging economies, do not need charity, but solidarity. Our peoples do not need gracious concessions, but equitable distribution of the wealth that everyone in the world produces.

A central policy of my Government is to focus on the social sectors where there is poverty and need. If we are to move forward and overcome the precarious situation of much of our population, we must have the capacity to act, political leaders who are able to fight corruption and judges who have the courage to apply the law and impose justice. Likewise, we know that our development also depends on businesspeople who are prepared to leave the informal sector in order to increase competitiveness and generate jobs to reduce poverty. But we also need to say in this forum that the protectionism of rich countries is like a vice that, tragically, is strangling our peoples.

It will be difficult to reduce world poverty while the wicked concentration of wealth continues. There must be a new world order that gives everyone a chance to participate and thus contributes to the universalization of human dignity. The unilateral flow of profits to the developed countries, to the detriment of less fortunate countries, is not only unjust but a real threat to world peace. The multidirectional allocation of resources to all nations is the real way to fund democracy.

That is why, the Paraguayan Government is striving to fight poverty. When the Government came to power in 2003, the extreme poverty rate was 20.1 per cent. In 2004, we were able to bring it down to 17.1 per cent. In 2002, the total poverty rate in my country was 46.4 per cent because of decades of neglect. Today, according to the most recent data, we have managed to reduce the total poverty rate from 46.4 per cent in 2002 to 39.2 per cent. From 2003 — when our Government came to power — to 2004, our growth rate was 7.8 per cent according to the updated information of the Central Bank of Paraguay.

We hope that the United Nations will regain its coordinating role and put an end to the grave inequalities and injustices that afflict the planet. It is painful to see that priority continues to be given to the interests of those who have more, that the promises made to the Organization by the richest nations are not being kept and that the United Nations is becoming a bureaucracy incapable of creating standards which everyone conforms to, so that the abuses of globalization do not end up causing a new world war.

While fundamentalist terrorism causes anxiety and pain in those regions and in other regions with close historical ties to us, the true threats to fragile democracies, freedom and peace in Latin America are the refusal to give our products access to the major markets of the so-called first world, our exclusion from the bodies where major decisions are taken and the destruction of the ability of nation States to take action. It is precisely in order to improve the distribution of income that we are promoting the implementation of a national strategy to combat poverty and inequality.

In the field of education, Paraguay has significantly reduced illiteracy and increased school enrolment, and will continue to reduce the deficit in and improve the quality of basic and primary education. That Millennium Development Goal can be fulfilled by 2015. Today, illiteracy in Paraguay stands at 6.4 per cent, and my Government's objective is to obtain the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's certification of zero illiteracy in Paraguay by 2008. There has been an exponential growth in secondary, higher and university education. Gender parity in access to and duration of education has also been achieved at all levels.

Similarly, in recent years we have seen the growing participation of women in the development process and the strengthening of the legal system that protects their rights. We are fighting violence against women and human trafficking, and raising awareness of those problems. Women's participation in the three branches of Government has increased via the nomination of women ministers, the election of women parliamentarians and the appointment of women judges and of women in other Government bodies.

The reform of the health system stagnated in recent years, but has now been reactivated by my Government through the strengthening of public policies to improve basic health indicators, as reflected in the latest United Nations *Human Development Report*. We have done a great deal to reduce the levels of infant and maternal mortality, malnutrition and endemic diseases, and have been deeply involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS. We are working generally to ensure the accuracy of registries and statistics and

the application of greater human and technical resources in the health field. The Government will continue to implement all its programmes in order to further progress towards the goals that we have set ourselves.

The Government of Paraguay has incorporated the principles of sustainable development into national and sectoral policies, programmes and projects, which have reversed the deterioration of the environment. With the creation of an environmental secretariat and the cooperation of local Governments and civil society, we have successfully implemented environmental programmes, although we have a great deal more to do in that sector. This year, we approved a national environmental policy focused on the conservation and appropriate usage of our natural and cultural heritage so as to guarantee the sustainability of development, the fair distribution of profits, environmental justice and the quality of life of present and future generations.

We still face the task of bridging the gaps in the provision of housing, water and basic sanitation, which have a negative impact on our people through overcrowding and the contamination of soil, food and water. Pursuant to the goals it has established, the Government is upgrading city neighbourhoods and settlements.

We believe that, if we are to meet the development partnership Goal, a fair and equitable trade regime is of the highest importance to the development of our countries in Latin America. To that end, we reject any attempt to perpetuate the protectionist measures of the developed world, in particular subsidies for the production and export of agricultural products, as well as the use of technical regulations as barriers to manufactured products.

Technological progress should be at the service of humankind, but it is hindered by the digital divide, wherein 80 per cent of Internet users are concentrated in the developed countries while half the people on the planet have not yet had the experience of making a telephone call. That pathetic contrast will inevitably lead to even greater inequality, because it will widen the existing disparities. In light of such circumstances, we need a new approach to managing research and promoting technology and innovation so as to set the stage for a new development model with a human face, based on intelligence, knowledge and the historic conscience of our citizens.

Paraguay calls for national and international players to combine their efforts to create fair social development within a model of democratic coexistence. We will continue to struggle to that end, and hope soon to submit a report that will reflect even greater progress towards the well-being and prosperity of our people, because freedom and justice can be consolidated only in an environment of development for all.

The Co-Chairperson (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Kurmanbek Bakiev, President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

President Bakiev (*spoke in Russian*): The present summit is taking place during the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, a milestone not only for the further destiny of the Organization, but also for the entire world community and the entire system of international relations. This forum gives us a rare opportunity to find collective answers and to develop joint approaches to such contemporary global issues and threats as poverty, hunger, disease, international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

While giving due credit to the foresight of the Organization's founders, we should note that the activities of the United Nations can and should be further advanced in light of modern realities and the prospects for world development.

Today, the peoples of our countries justifiably expect from all of us the adoption of measures for the further transformation of the United Nations into an effective tool for addressing the problems of the new millennium. In that regard, Kyrgyzstan supports the need to reform the General Assembly and to strengthen the coordinating functions of the Economic and Social Council. We also support the expansion of the Security Council and its geographical representativity, and the enhancement of its efficiency.

The Kyrgyz Republic confirms its full and comprehensive adherence to the universal goals and objectives reflected in the Millennium Declaration. The national mid-term programme of action now drafted in Kyrgyzstan will be closely connected to the Millennium Development Goals.

We intend to ensure through the programme the strengthening of democratic government and economic growth in our country. We believe that it will help to resolve our outstanding social and economic problems, including overcoming poverty and corruption, improving the standard of living and creating conditions for comprehensive human development.

That being said, a high level of external debt is one of the barriers impeding efforts towards sustainable development in our Republic, where 94 per cent of the territory is mountainous. The enormous external debt — the repayment of which requires a huge outlay — is preventing us from providing our regions with due support for development. Kyrgyzstan supports the view that an acceptable debt level needs to be defined and that measures are urgently required to lighten the debt burden for developing countries. The positive decisions of the Paris Club to reduce the external debt of the country will be an important factor in the further social and economic development of Kyrgyzstan, and in the long term will help our country to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In our opinion, the world community should consider the question of additional support to mountainous developing countries for the realization of sustainable development goals.

This year — 2005 — is exceptionally important for Kyrgyzstan and will forever have a place in its centuries-old history. On 24 March, our people resolutely pronounced their commitment to a democratic path to development and the noble ideals of freedom. The new leadership of the Kyrgyz Republic intends to make every possible effort to bridge the gap between the people and the State. The future certainly belongs to them. We want the world to see the positive effects of the changes in Kyrgyzstan and call on the international community to give active support and to help our people so that they can resolve the problems of sustainable development.

Since the early 1990s, our country has travelled a tortuous path. For some of the people of Kyrgyzstan many of the difficulties and trials are already behind them. Despite all the complexities of the transition period, our people have learned a great deal, gaining a sense of freedom and democracy and laying the foundations for a market economy, applying advanced economic formulas and drawing on international experience.

Protecting the fundamental principles of freedom and democracy in the Kyrgyz Republic, we have laid down a broad basis for the development of a civil society. I firmly believe that the country cannot be renewed without the participation of the people. We are deeply convinced that civil society should be the partner of Government and that human rights are a fundamental value of society.

Since the March revolution, civil society has clearly called on the Government to ensure transparency and dismantle corruption. In our uncompromising struggle against corruption we are committed to using the internationally accepted mechanisms. We have already taken the first steps. In June this year the Kyrgyz Parliament ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption. A State strategy to combat corruption is being developed in the form of a plan of action, and active steps are being taken to set up a nationwide anti-corruption body. We are firmly committed to the eradication of corruption in each and every cell of the body of society, from its outlying villages to its highest State institutions.

Protection of human rights, the observance of democratic principles in practice and not just in words, is one of the priorities for our new Kyrgyzstan. We consider that the sustained and effective protection of human rights is an important precondition for the maintenance of world stability and prosperity, in each country individually, as well as at the global level.

For the Kyrgyz Republic it is a great honour to be part of the community of free nations that recently established the United Nations Democracy Fund in New York. We entirely support the creation of the Fund and we trust that it will serve to give a powerful impetus to the promotion of democracy in many countries of the world.

The Kyrgyz Republic's firm adherence to its international obligations regarding fundamental human rights, freedom of speech, assembly and the press, the rule of law and democracy, including the rights of refugees, has already been demonstrated through its concrete actions.

In that connection, the people of Kyrgyzstan have the right to hope that they will not be left to deal unaided with their own problems, but that the United Nations, other international organizations and donor countries will give due support to Kyrgyzstan to help it

realize its noble aspirations to freedom, democracy and to development.

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that this forum will be an important step towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Kyrgyz Republic, for its part, is ready to do its utmost to contribute to the prompt implementation of the lofty principles of peace, stability and development enshrined in the Millennium Declaration.

The Co-Chairperson (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia.

President Yudhoyono: I come here to speak for 220 million Indonesians as their first directly elected President. I also carry the message of 4.6 billion people of Asia and Africa represented in the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership formed in Jakarta last April. I wish to convey to you the commitment of the Asia-Pacific region, embodied in the Jakarta Declaration, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. For them, I intend to speak of security, development, human rights and United Nations reform.

When I say development, I mean the challenge of poverty. Poverty is a killer. Eight million human beings — most of them in Asia and Africa — die every year because they are too poor to live. To stop this killer we must attain the Millennium Development Goals. We must form a global partnership for development. We must faithfully respond to the outcomes of major United Nations conferences on development. There must be a flow of financing for development. Exports from developing countries must have access to markets in a rules-based international trading system.

The developing countries must achieve good governance, fight corruption, make efficient use of their limited resources, and plan and carry out appropriate development strategies. For their part, developed countries must fulfil their commitment to a genuine and mutually beneficial global partnership for development.

As to global security, we need a reformed Security Council with a membership that reflects global realities. The Asia-Pacific region, home to more than half of the human race and cradle of ancient civilizations and religions, should have more seats on the Council. New permanent members should be chosen on the basis of a set of appropriate criteria. We must also do away with the right of veto, which often paralyses the Council.

We need a disarmament and non-proliferation regime that leads to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. But we must encourage the peaceful use of nuclear energy for development.

We need a Peacebuilding Commission that works in coordination with both the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and under the mandate of the General Assembly.

We need consensus on the responsibility to protect people from genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. To this end, force should be used only when all other means have failed.

In the fight against terrorism, we must develop effective international cooperation to deal with this threat. No human right may be sacrificed. We must find and deal with the root causes of terrorism.

We in Indonesia believe that interfaith dialogue and empowering the moderates can reduce violent radicalism.

We need to empower the Economic and Social Council so that it can effectively review and coordinate international cooperation in development.

The projected Human Rights Council should be a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. It must be free of politicization and double standards.

No effort at United Nations reform is complete unless it affirms and brings into reality the central role of the General Assembly as the main body of the United Nations.

Indonesia will continue to support any efforts to strengthen and revitalize the effectiveness of the United Nations in facing new challenges. In this regard, Indonesia urges that the United Nations reform should be made in a comprehensive, step-by-step and sustainable manner. Basically, reforming the United Nations is no different from reforming a nation. It is all about working for democracy so that democracy will work for us. In the process, change must be as democratic as possible. We are experiencing this in Indonesia. We face many challenges, but we are grateful that reforms and democratization are working. We are reconstructing our economy. We are creating

jobs to reduce the number of our poor. Committed to good governance, we are winning the fight against terrorism. We are building the peace in Aceh.

If we succeed in reforming ourselves and in attaining democracy and good governance as individual nations and as an international Organization, the world will change; but, in order to achieve a world of peace, justice and equitable prosperity and a reformed United Nations, we must have the will and the spirit, the necessary consensus and the commitment to work together.

The Co-Chairperson (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Voronin, President of the Republic of Moldova.

President Voronin (*spoke in Moldovan; English text provided by the delegation*): The report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005), and the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) not only describe with accuracy the threats and challenges that exist today in the area of peace, security, development and human rights, but also show the right direction and measures that need to be undertaken in order to address them. These actions are meant to confer a new dynamism to the process of implementing the Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a process that has been adversely affected by the complexity of the international climate following 11 September 2001.

Along with other Member States, the Republic of Moldova believes that these new circumstances require that we revitalize the consensus on major challenges and priorities and convert this new consensus into collective action that could lead, inter alia, to the renewal and strengthening of the United Nations system.

In this regard, I deem it very important to declare at this Summit my country's continuing commitment to the United Nations and to pledge our firm support to the Organization and to the draft outcome document that we shall be adopting. The Republic of Moldova supports the adoption of the necessary decisions by the Member States, including those to be adopted within the framework of this meeting, that will lead to the revitalization of the General Assembly, the reform and expansion of the Security Council, an increase in the effectiveness of the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Secretariat and the creation of a Human Rights Council and a Peacebuilding Commission. We also favour the elimination of certain obsolete references in the United Nations Charter regarding the Trusteeship Council and "enemy States".

As a country facing the difficulties of transition and still affected by the consequences of an unsettled internal conflict, which has been inspired and supported from abroad, the Republic of Moldova is deeply interested in promoting, at the national level, the values that form the foundation of the aforementioned documents. I wish to emphasize, in this context, that unless the factors of external pressure, including the foreign military presence are removed, unless Transnistria is democratized and demilitarized and unless the State borders on the perimeter of this area are controlled, it will be impossible to settle the conflict, to stop the illegal trafficking of arms, drugs and human beings and to provide stability and security for this part of the European continent.

We will also continue to work vigorously to further develop the rule of law and democracy and to ensure a maximum level of protection of human rights throughout the territory of the Republic of Moldova, so that our citizens in the area controlled by the totalitarian separatist regime from Tiraspol can also enjoy them.

Likewise, we pledge to make all efforts to ensure sustained economic development, to increase the welfare of our citizens and to improve socio-economic indicators, including the achievement of the MDGs. These specific priorities are complementary to those related to European integration, which has become an irreversible strategic objective of our internal and external policies.

From this perspective, we hope that our efforts will be supported more actively by the international community in the spirit of the global partnership that we are trying to reaffirm at this summit.

In conclusion, I wish to join previous speakers who have appealed for the renewal of commitments and for concrete actions. This is the only way to move on towards a world of liberty, prosperity, justice and peace. It is precisely this collective vision that is enshrined in the United Nations Charter and in support of which the Republic of Moldova continues to remain

a faithful and committed member of the world Organization.

The Co-Chairperson (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Majesty King Abdullah Bin Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

King Abdullah Bin Al Hussein: Five years ago, the world's leaders met here to declare a new vision for a new age. The Millennium Summit was a response to a global moral consensus; our world can no longer deny the basics of life and peace to billions of people.

Five years later, it is clear that we acted not a moment too soon. Humanity has seen the dangers of a global system that excludes people, especially youth, from opportunity and hope. Now, the people of the world are looking to us to bring our nations together, to act with urgency and to achieve results.

I am honoured to report that Jordan is on track to achieve the majority of its Millennium development targets. The challenges are real, and there is much to be done. But gains are being made in poverty reduction, health, education, gender equality, the environment and more. This effort is only part of Jordan's much larger national strategy — a comprehensive, inclusive approach to reform and development.

Yet, we do not act in a vacuum. Our country, our region and the world are all affected by the prospects for peace. One critical step is to ensure zero tolerance towards those who promote extremism. Jordan has worked with the international Muslim community to oppose extremist interpretations of Islam. Jordan wants true, moderate, traditional Islam to replace fundamentalist, radical and militant Islam everywhere in the world for every single Muslim.

In November 2004, we issued the Amman Message, which sought to clarify the true nature of Islam: what it is and what it is not. Then last July, over 180 scholars met in Amman. They represented 45 countries and were supported by fatwas from 17 of the world's greatest Islamic scholars. Together, they achieved for the first time in history a unanimous consensus on a number of critical issues.

First, the declaration they issued recognized the legitimacy and common principles of all eight of the traditional schools of Islamic religious law.

Secondly, it defined the necessary qualifications and conditions for issuing fatwas. This exposes the illegitimacy of the extremist fatwas justifying terrorism, which contravene the traditional schools of Islamic religious law and are in clear violation of Islam's core principles.

Thirdly, the declaration condemned the practice known as *takfir* (calling others apostates) — a practice that is used by extremists to justify violence against those who do not agree with them.

Even as we work for peace, development must go forward. Important in this effort is Millennium Goal 8: international partnership.

When developed nations commit to active, increased development support, they advance global progress for all. The world knows what is needed: fair trade, increased direct assistance and debt relief. The recent G8 agreement on debt relief for the poorest nations was a positive step. The European Union has put forward a calendar on increased assistance. We need to continue and expand such efforts.

This is particularly important with regard to the key group of lower-middle-income and middle-income countries. Our countries have a major role in regional and global stability. Many of us have been forging ahead with reforms at full steam and are on the verge of reaching higher levels of income. That success can translate into real development gains, only if it is nourished and sustained. A group of determined leaders, mostly from middle-income countries, are discussing shared concerns: free and fair trade, targeted aid and more. We have agreed to continue our discussions on ways to reach accord with the developed nations.

This world summit recognizes that our globe is one of shared dependence and shared opportunity. We have a strategic and also a moral mission. It is now in our hands to prove to the world's people, especially our youth, that our international institutions work and that global justice is real.

The Co-Chairperson (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Martín Torrijos, President of Panama.

President Torrijos (*spoke in Spanish*): Panama has a clear, unequivocal and compelling commitment to fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals. Ours

is not a statement of rhetoric or mere protocol. We have adopted the goals, targets and indicators as a reference framework for drawing up our public policies. We have made them mandatory, and we are determined to fulfil them as vigorously as we would an international treaty.

We are making a great effort to eradicate poverty and hunger, focusing on less fortunate populations, creating redistributive polices through comprehensive tax reform and transferring direct and indirect resources to populations that have been marginalized from development for decade after decade.

Poverty does not affect just poor people. Poverty holds back the development of a whole country. Poverty prevents us from moving forward as an integrated society that shares the same aspirations and enjoys the same opportunities for achieving them.

We are close to achieving universal primary education. Our aim is to provide high-quality education for all, with relevant content, and to expand pre-school education.

We have made progress, although still insufficient, in reducing infant mortality and are fully confident that we shall be able to reduce maternal mortality since, for the first time in the history of Panama, we have established universal and free coverage for all prenatal care and hospital deliveries.

We have a real challenge fighting HIV/AIDS, and we recognize the need to be innovative and more creative in promoting effective prevention and in raising the awareness of populations at risk, particularly women and young people.

Panama, for its part, has heavily stressed building a society without exclusion, where those with disabilities can feel that they are participating in their own development instead of feeling discriminated against and can fully enjoy the fundamental human rights.

Panama welcomes the fact that the United Nations has set measurable and quantifiable goals in order to evaluate country-by-country progress towards achieving the Millennium Goals within a broader concept of freedom.

We fully share, and this is a key part of the Government's programme, the conviction that without security there can be no development and that security and development can only be maintained when human rights are fully in effect.

Panama has supported the High-level Meeting's draft outcome document (A/60/L.1), not because it is in full agreement with it but because it understands that the document is the beginning of a process of reform. In particular, I consider its approach on legal and illegal trafficking of small arms and light weapons instruments, which are the instruments of crime, to be very timid, and it shows very little progress on the issue of development.

We regret that the document that we are about to adopt is not more clear and forceful on the issue of human rights, in particular with regard to creating a human rights council as a principal organ of the Organization, with a clear and precise mandate in order to avoid the politicization and the discrimination that can be seen on this issue in the Organization today.

The fact that we have devoted such great effort to the reform of the Organization and to the High-level Meeting's draft outcome document is tacit recognition of that reform's shortcomings and weaknesses and of the need to bring it up to date with our times. Nevertheless, we express our pride and satisfaction that the United Nations has been vital to the world over the past 60 years. We must ensure that it continues to be vital in the imperative task of eradicating poverty.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Aleksander Kwaśniewski, President of the Republic of Poland.

President Kwaśniewski: The United Nations today is facing the unprecedented challenge of providing humanity with new hope to build the civilization of the twenty-first century on a solid foundation of universal values: freedom, security, democracy and solidarity.

Polish dedication to those values draws strength from our past experiences. This year in Poland we commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Solidarity movement, which inspired profound changes in Central and Eastern Europe. Above all, it mobilized nations and societies around fundamental values and noble principles. In that spirit, the anniversary celebrations attended by numerous heads of State and Government concluded with the appeal to make 31 August the World Day of Freedom and Solidarity.

Today, I wish to repeat that appeal and call for a world united in freedom and solidarity.

Solidarity should be considered a key principle of international relations. It combines respect for diversity and a readiness to provide assistance. As His Holiness Pope John Paul II underlined, it is based on the cooperation of one person with another — not one person against another — and on unity prevailing over divisions. The solidarity of nations should always prevail over national egoism. The European Union has proved that it is possible to build structures and mechanisms of cooperation in a spirit of true solidarity.

The principle of solidarity remains inextricably linked to that of freedom. For many, freedom remains an unfulfilled dream. On several continents, people are deprived of their basic rights. However, freedom cannot be imposed from the outside. It must grow from within and from below. Democratic changes do not occur because they are masterminded somewhere else, but because people want them. We must learn how to advance freedom without imposing anything and how to foster freedom without relieving States of their primary responsibility towards their citizens. The United Nations should make us feel confident that the international community will provide people with the necessary protection and assistance when the State is unable to deliver.

I hope that the recently established United Nations Democracy Fund, which Poland supports and to which it is ready to contribute, will offer genuine assistance for those that aspire to and uphold freedom and solidarity.

We must also show greater determination in our response to problems such as violence, poverty, social exclusion, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We must stand up to those who ignore the unity of our world and see it as a battlefield of fighting religions, nations and races. Therefore, the United Nations must pursue a far-reaching and comprehensive vision of change and play a more decisive and effective role in shaping a broad development policy that contributes to improving life in all parts of the world.

As our contribution to that change, the Republic of Poland has reaffirmed on numerous occasions the need to elaborate a new political act of the United Nations for the twenty-first century. In fact, the Polish vision of United Nations reform reflects our strong commitment to fundamental values and principles, as well as to effective multilateralism, which should serve as a guiding principle of United Nations activities.

The High-level Meeting's draft outcome document reflects many of the ideas proposed by the Polish Government. At the same time, it reflects, in many ways, a lower than expected consensus and should be taken as the basis for further reform efforts. There is no need to say how much we regret that neither arms control nor non-proliferation issues are covered in the document. Despite our great determination, we were not able to achieve unity in confronting all the problems facing the United Nations.

On the other hand, we should not expect that each and every summit meeting will bring revolutionary changes. The real breakthrough usually comes in the wake of a lengthy and gradual process of change and adaptation. Indeed, the draft outcome document, the preparatory process and the discussions that took place at the meeting all provide many substantial insights and ideas and very useful recommendations that further merit our serious consideration. How to implement them, how to translate them into concrete action and how to build practical consensus around them remain a serious challenge for the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

Poland will continue to strive for a genuine and comprehensive reform that helps strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations. We cannot build a secure and just world without a strong commitment to act together through the United Nations. Freedom, security, democracy and solidarity must serve as the key guides to lead the Organization in the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé, President of the Togolese Republic.

President Gnassingbé (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to extend once again to the Government and the people of the United States the deepest condolences and sympathy of the Government and the people of the Togolese Republic in connection with Hurricane Katrina, which caused great damage to that country.

Assembled in this Hall five years ago, heads of State or Government of the whole world undertook to

set the new guidelines that could help us meet the numerous challenges and threats confronting the dawning twenty-first century, while reaffirming their faith in the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Since then, considerable ground has been covered, as human communities have advanced towards greater justice and solidarity and as they have sought for concerted solutions to world problems. The resolve made at the historic Summit to free people from "the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty" (*resolution 55/2, para. III.11*), continues to underpin our common determination to assume our responsibilities as leaders and promoters of a vast movement in the world towards shared, improved well-being and to the preservation of peace and security. The improved design and functioning of international institutions have led to a new dynamic based on respect for the rule of law and for procedures defined at the successive sessions of the General Assembly.

We have thus seen emerge, step by step, the right of peoples to self-determination, the protection of sovereignty and development mechanisms that reflect a more effective sense of solidarity. Thus, in spite of persistent conflicts and hot spots, the world has moved resolutely ahead along the exhilarating path of positive change, thereby giving people a better chance of controlling their fate.

The impact of the Millennium Summit, through the recommendations and guidelines it produced, has shown the will of the States Member of our Organization to pool their efforts and energy to resolve the problems of our planet and to seek together the progress and security of their peoples. It could not be otherwise in a world which is more and more interdependent, where threats, whatever their nature, spare no State. For example, the lightning spread of certain pandemics and the violence of natural disasters, which for several months have been wreaking havoc wherever they have struck, remind us that no country can face up to such situations alone.

By the same token, the fight against poverty, hunger, illiteracy and inequality, indeed all efforts to reduce poverty and promote socio-economic development, call for an active partnership.

In spite of delays in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and as in the implementation of the results of world forums on financing for development, Togo, my country, strongly hopes that the fresh impetus given by the current summit will lead our partners of the North to honour their commitments.

In this context, we should welcome all the recent initiatives for development, including the decisions of the last G-8 Summit at Glen Eagles and the proposals concerning the search for new sources of financing for development or the eradication of obstacles to international trade.

Efforts to achieve the MDGs need to go hand in hand with a bold reform of the United Nations and an improvement in the functioning of its bodies, if we wish to strengthen the overall system and make it more effective and more credible. Thus it would make sense, especially in the case of the Security Council, to ensure that the reform effort does not aim at merely satisfying the ambitions, legitimate though they are, of certain major countries, but to ensure that all the regions of the world, and particularly Africa, are equitably represented in it.

Togo reaffirms its readiness to participate actively in this debate and its commitment to make its own modest contribution to action to "promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom", as the Organization's Charter urges us to do.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Eduardo Rodriguez Veltzé, President of the Republic of Bolivia.

President Veltzé (*spoke in Spanish*): In this brief statement to the 2005 summit, I wish to convey the commitment of my country to participate actively in the collective effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We are convinced that these are ambitious but absolutely legitimate goals. Nevertheless, we would point out that there are essential preconditions here, such as coordinated and harmonious international cooperation, and that isolated efforts will not meet the expectations of nations still suffering from the effects of an unjust international order and seeking within themselves new paths to equity and social inclusion, as being part and parcel of the concept of freedom.

The people of Bolivia share the need to establish the basic conditions to guarantee freedom from poverty. This is because poverty also includes factors

that need to be dealt with in universal terms, since it has to do not only with aspects such as debt relief, but also with the liberalization of trade.

National security and the well-being of the international community are sorely affected by the difficulty of combating the drug trade. Cooperation to that end cannot be simply a question of money. It requires the establishment of joint policies to give those in the affected areas renewed opportunities and fresh hopes. At the Summit of the Americas in 2002 in Quebec, the presidents of the countries of our region undertook to open up markets for products that would be alternatives to the crops used for the manufacture of drugs. This policy, if implemented and extended to other regions as well, would play an important part in enabling people to live with less hardship and greater dignity. If democracy means the rule of law, ensuring that the majority and minorities live together in harmony and respect, it should also be the guarantee of the right to live without fear.

My country will participate in all efforts made collectively within the United Nations, as well as bilaterally, to fight terrorism, which is an expression of intolerance.

Bolivia considers that the United Nations has in its 60 years of existence fulfilled the goals of its founders. They were six decades fraught with tensions and threats, but that also saw the expansion of our area of dialogue and cooperation. We must accept that the world Organization is not now representative of current realities. In its structure, global confrontation continues to smolder. This is why we need to renew its structures and procedures without losing its core, which is an expression of efforts for peace and, of course, mutual cooperation. We support the reform that will help to give us a fresh start. Bolivia will join the initiatives to expand the Security Council and to strengthen the Economic and Social Council, which should play a crucial role in ensuring that the MDGs are achieved, and in mobilizing efforts to facilitate dialogue and mutual consultation, to alleviate hunger, a scourge for many nations, and to promote cooperation directed towards improved levels of well-being. As we are well aware, this will also make a vital contribution to peace.

However, my Government is extremely interested in seeing the international community come together in the establishment of an institution that is fundamental to civic freedom: the human rights council. We also believe that the creation of the peacebuilding commission is of great significance and will lead to international cooperation and harmony.

My country is resolved to strengthen its own institutions. The Bolivian people has gone through difficult times recently and is selflessly and maturely reinvigorating its democratic process as an essential element of life in our Republic. In that complex situation, Bolivia reiterates its determination to continue striving for significant progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Enunciating goals is only one part of the story. Our diverse countries suffer a wide spectrum of problems and obstacles. It would be simply pointless to try to assess a country's efforts and successes without taking its particular circumstances into account. We need instead, constructively and jointly, to follow up the Goals and offer more cooperation to those that need it most and have the greatest difficulties. We must obsess not over deadlines, but over our work, which should be shared fairly and equally.

The Co-Chairperson (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia.

President Mesić (*spoke in Croatian; English text provided by the delegation*): Today, 60 years after our predecessors established this unique Organization, whose programme is suggested by its very name, the United Nations, we can face one another as their successors and say contentedly: We have succeeded.

At the same time, however, six decades after the establishment of the United Nations, we must face one another with a sense of bitter reality and say: We have failed. Both are true.

Both statements speak not only about the world in the recent past, but most of all about ourselves, because, as has often been said, with good reason, the United Nations is as good as its Member States. Of course, those States determine by their behaviour the world in which we live. It is an indisputable fact that the world that founded the United Nations was much more united than the present world. It was a world united by a common goal — opposition to the ideology and practice of fascism and Nazism — and determined to prevent any repetition of the horrors of aggressive

wars and of the Holocaust, the full truth of which had just begun to reach the public.

Our Organization was founded at the end of the greatest conflict in the history of humankind to date. It was founded with the noble intention, as stated in its Charter, of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. That is precisely the first element that provides the basis for my initial statements. Yes, we have preserved peace on the global scale, there has been no new world war, and to that extent we have been successful. But we have not been able to save the world and humankind from a protracted series of cruel and bloody wars, and in that context we have undeniably failed.

The principles of freedom — national and individual freedom — and of equality in international relations were among the priorities of the new world that was being built. The issue of development and the closing of the ever larger gap between the developed and the underdeveloped have long been on the agenda of the General Assembly. We have also discussed terrorism — to be sure, mainly that subsumed under the rubric of State terrorism. Lacking the strength to prevent them, we have endeavoured to heal the consequences of wars and armed conflicts. The results of all those efforts have been incomplete and partial; we have achieved progress, but no issue has been dealt with conclusively.

Our current tasks were formulated very well at the millennial meeting five years ago. On behalf of the Republic of Croatia, I welcome the declaration on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Although it does not fully conform to its original intent, the declaration testifies to the prevailing mood in favour of supporting the Goals and tasks that have been identified as key and imperative issues.

The fact remains, however, that we have partly succeeded but also partly failed with respect to the basic principles governing relations in the international arena, the development of the underdeveloped, and armed conflicts and terrorism. Thus, if today, 60 years later, we must answer the question "Can we be satisfied?", the only honest answer is: Only partly.

What, in that case, are we to do? First of all, our Organization — imperfect but irreplaceable, underefficient but imperative, sometimes deliberately marginalized but, luckily, never fully relegated to the background — must become the reflection and the expression of our world, an Organization capable of tackling its problems vigorously and efficiently. The United Nations must be reformed.

There is no alternative to that, and that should be clear to everyone who wants this Organization to play the role envisioned by its founders. The Republic of Croatia is the successor to one of the founding countries of the United Nations, and my country cherishes the sublime ideals governing the founders of the Organization.

The key agencies of the United Nations in general, and their structure in particular, reflect the world as it was at the end of the Second World War — a world that no longer exists. That calls for a change. The United Nations I have in mind must reflect the world in which we live today and even anticipate the world of tomorrow. Can we be unanimous on that — let me stress this point again — imperative reform? I do not think so. Should that deter us from reform? On no account.

Let me be completely clear. The concept of reform must proceed from current reality; it must consider the foreseeable trends of future development; and, most importantly, it must be acceptable to a convincing majority of the Members of our global Organization. This is our Organization and we are the ones it should serve.

The majority in this Organization is against war and in favour of peace; against force and the use of force and in favour of negotiation and the peaceful settlement of issues; against poverty, falling behind and underdevelopment and in favour of global development and prosperity; against all forms of terrorism and in favour of the security of States and citizens; against discrimination and intolerance of any kind and in favour of equality and recognition of diversity; and against the sacrificing of our environment to fast profit and in favour of the preservation of the plant and animal worlds, the bases of life on our planet.

The United Nations must become qualified to achieve those goals. The Organization must draw its strength from our firm commitment to building a world that will not only be better than the world of 60 years ago, but even better than our current world. It must never become a mere ornament on the international scene. Even more importantly, it must never become a screen providing legitimacy to any policy clearly opposed to the mood of the majority — our mood, the

mood of the nations and States united in the effort to build a better future world.

Nevertheless, in spite of that only partial success, we have achieved a lot. There are great goals and difficult tasks ahead of us. We are now faced with a question that calls for an answer by deeds rather than words: Can we be united in order to survive, in order to literally save our world for future generations?

I hope and believe that we will have the strength and the wisdom to answer that question in the affirmative. We owe it not only to the founders of the United Nations but also to our children and to their children. We must not betray them.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan, President of the Republic of Suriname.

President Venetiaan: My delegation is pleased to see the delegations of Gabon and Sweden presiding over this very important meeting.

Suriname joins the rest of the international community in expressing its profound sorrow at the tremendous loss of life and property caused by Hurricane Katrina to the Gulf Coast of the United States of America.

This significant gathering should be testimony to the resolve of the international community to collectively arrive at adequate responses to the many challenges it is facing. It should also represent the genuine beginning of an era of concerted actions aimed at implementing the commitments made at major United Nations conferences. This requires a reformed United Nations that can effectively deal with such challenges.

The outcome document we are about to adopt outlines concrete measures to ensure effective follow-up to a number of commitments we have solemnly made over the past 60 years. As concerns some of the major issues, we still need to adopt measures in order to reach the lofty goals we have set ourselves.

Suriname recently submitted a baseline report on the national implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. I am pleased to report that we are making progress in some areas, especially in the areas of education and of the environment. However, like the rest of the world, we are still encountering difficulties in other areas. My Government remains committed to working with national stakeholders, as well as with regional and international partners, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and we have taken the necessary steps to set up a network of State and non-State actors to monitor the national implementation of our international commitments.

My Government is aware of its own responsibility in the development process. However, like most other developing countries, we have encountered some serious obstacles, such as unfair trade and high debts, which have a negative influence on this process.

A particularly important and longstanding undertaking which has yet to be realized relates to the issue of official development assistance (ODA). With a few exceptions, the developed countries have not yet met the targets to which they committed themselves. On the contrary, ODA has declined.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a region of small and vulnerable economies, has experienced this significant decrease in ODA. It is to be hoped that the appeal contained in the Secretary-General's report will be heeded. The report calls on those developed countries that have not yet established a timetable to achieve the 0.7 per cent of GDP goal for ODA to do so, starting with significant increases no later than 2006, reaching 0.5 per cent by 2009, and 0.7 per cent no later than 2015.

Suriname agrees that there can be no development without security, and no security without development. Neither can there be sustainable development if human rights are not respected.

Reform of the human rights machinery, as is the case for many United Nations reforms, is now long overdue. The Government of Suriname can generally accept the creation of a Human Rights Council. We support the view that the open-ended working group which will be set up should embark on an elaborate discussion on the modalities, mandate, review process and composition of such a Council.

The international community has witnessed noticeable setbacks with regard to disarmament and non-proliferation. It is regrettable, therefore, that this important issue is not mentioned in the outcome document we are about to adopt.

In closing, I would like to stress the fact that the situation in the world can improve only if we all live up to our commitments. Our people depend on us to lead them on the path towards a decent life for each human being, in a peaceful world, free of famine and free of poverty.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Jorge Fernando Branco de Sampaio, President of the Portuguese Republic.

President Sampaio (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): I am addressing the General Assembly for the last time as President of the Portuguese Republic this year — a year in which we are celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations. I feel, on this historic date, that the generation to which I belong is charged with a responsibility that cannot be put off: the responsibility of responding to global challenges — which increasingly demand integrated, collective answers — and of fulfilling the just aspirations of millions of individuals for whom day-to-day life is no more than an ongoing, inglorious struggle for survival. It is the duty of the United Nations to articulate such responses and to point the way forward to meeting those expectations.

The United Nations has always occupied a central position on the international stage; it has been a constant focal point for the hopes of humankind. Peace, development and the protection of human rights on a global scale were the fundamental aspirations of its founders. But early on the latter were confronted with the harsh realities of power and conflicting interests. Not everything was a success. But their idealism and hope, because they corresponded to the most basic of human aspirations — dignity, freedom and economic development — have continued to prevail and have preserved their vitality, even in adversity.

During these six decades, much progress has been made in the areas of life expectancy, health, education and quality of life. Unfortunately, however, we also know that there are still many millions of human beings who still live and die in the most extreme poverty.

At this summit, the international community renews its commitment to the founding ideals of the Organization. The Millennium Development Goals make it possible for those ideas to be translated into concrete achievements that will meet the needs of the poorer and more vulnerable segments of society in particular. Achieving the Goals is a moral and political imperative to ensure a more secure future for all humankind. Portugal reiterates its support to these lofty objectives and its commitment to an effective multilateral system, which is essential for their achievement.

The Millennium Summit was a turning point for global partnership. Since then, considerable awareness has been created among Governments and public opinion alike of the absolute priority of reducing poverty. How can we be at peace with our conscience while, in this era of abundance unprecedented in our history, millions of human beings die of poverty?

Achievement of the Goals that we set is within our grasp. If politics is the art of the possible, then we, as political leaders, are charged with making things possible. As a member of the European Union, Portugal is committed to ensuring that European aid rises to 0.56 per cent in 2010 and to 0.7 per cent in 2015. As to national aid, we intend to increase our volume of official development assistance to 0.51 per cent of our gross domestic product (GDP) by 2010.

Portugal has directed a large part of its effort to countries in which the scourge of poverty is felt most keenly. We attach particular importance to the least developed countries, particularly those in Africa, to which we devote 0.2 per cent of our GDP, fully meeting our stated objectives. The relationship that Portugal has maintained with that continent over centuries fully warrants that, as do the situation of extreme poverty and the manifest delay in meeting the established goals.

We support the movement towards debt forgiveness, and we also believe in the creative identification of alternative sources of financing aid for development. We are focusing attention on pandemics in particular, as they are affecting those countries so severely, and we recently increased to $5 million our contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. In Africa in particular, those diseases constitute the greatest threat to human security. What will future generations think if, with the resources and information available to us, we show that we are incapable of dealing with such threats?

On the issue of cooperation for development, aid donors and recipients have a shared responsibility, since aid will never be sufficient if it is not properly applied. We therefore attach particular importance not only to good governance, but especially to the primacy of law and the consolidation of democracy, and also to the restoration of the State's capabilities in performing its basic functions.

Without security there can be no sustainable development. Only a coherent, integrated strategy can allow for effective action in preventing conflicts or — should that prove impossible — in providing the necessary support for reconstruction and the restoration of the capabilities of States and institutions during the post-conflict period. That is the twofold task of the Peacebuilding Commission, which was initially proposed by Portugal in 2003. The establishment of that body will surely constitute one of the landmarks of this summit.

We believe that the United Nations has an important part to play in the fight against international terrorism, ensuring an effective, multilateral response to that terrible new threat. The negotiation and conclusion of a global convention on terrorism should continue to be a priority.

There is also an urgent need to relaunch discussions on disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction within the framework of this Organization.

We attach particular importance to the issue of human rights. We believe that the new Human Rights Council should reflect, with courage and ambition, the growing demands of the international community in that regard.

The document that is to be adopted during this Meeting will be a step in the right direction. It demonstrates the ability of the international community to unite around the great principles upon which the United Nations was founded and it renews and reiterates the commitment to the development goals of the Millennium Declaration. It will begin the process of the reform of the Organization so as to render it better able to respond to the challenges of this century. The course has been charted. It is now for the Assembly to assume the great responsibility of bringing to completion the process that we have begun.

For its part, Portugal reiterates its firm commitment to multilateralism, to the United Nations and to an international order in which the collective interest is not systematically sacrificed to expediency and self-centred interests. Now, as at the time of its foundation, the United Nations must constitute the essential anchor of a system of international relations based on law and justice. Strengthening the authority, the legitimacy and the relevance of the United Nations is an essential task if the twenty-first century is to be one of peace, progress and respect for the dignity of all human beings.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Leonel Fernández Reyna, President of the Dominican Republic.

President Fernández Reyna (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a great honour for me to address the Assembly on behalf of the Government and the people of the Dominican Republic at this global summit, the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, which has been convened to review progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This summit will provide us with an opportunity to reaffirm commitments and redefine strategies so that we can continue to make progress in this complex but promising process on which the global community embarked five years ago with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

As for the Dominican Republic, I reaffirm our political will to foster a national consensus, promote public policies and ensure the technical and institutional capacity, as well as the financial resources, to make possible the gradual achievement of those Goals.

I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm my profound conviction that the true purpose of government, which exercises power from the privileged position bestowed upon it by the citizens through democratic elections, is to create economic and educational opportunities for all; to fight poverty, inequality, social exclusion and insecurity; and to improve the general living conditions and health of all our people.

The Millennium Development Goals enable us to better understand what needs to be done, while

confronting us with the challenge of designing a strategy and obtaining sufficient resources to make their achievement possible.

The Dominican Republic has created a Presidential Commission on the Millennium Development Goals to continuously monitor progress in the achievement of those objectives and to provide support to various ministries and Government departments with a view to keeping the focus on the implementation of the commitments entered into at the Millennium Summit.

The Presidential Commission also aims to maintain a dialogue and ensure an exchange of information with civil society entities, since we believe that only by redoubling our efforts, encouraging synergies and harnessing the goodwill of the public and private sectors, will we be able to achieve the Goals.

One of the first tasks we undertook upon taking up the reins of Government in August 2004 was to analyse the financial costs of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, established by this world Organization. After several inter-ministerial and inter-agency consultations, we came to the conclusion that the Dominican Republic needs between 29 to 30 billion dollars over the course of the next 10 years in order to achieve the MDGs at our national level. For a country with a gross domestic product of 21 billion dollars, those are truly impressive figures.

We ask ourselves the following. How are we going to obtain those resources? How are we going to finance our social development in a national context marked by major fiscal constraints? How will that be possible, following the domestic reforms stipulated in our agreement with the International Monetary Fund? Finally, how will we succeed, after having to keep at bay an economic crisis bequeathed to us, which several independent analysts consider to be one of the most severe and profound in Dominican history?

It is obvious that, domestically, we do not have anything like such resources. Consequently, we must turn to multilateral financial institutions, seek foreign capital investments and the cooperation of developed countries' governmental agencies.

Although we accept the principle established in the Monterrey Consensus that each country is responsible for its own development, that principle ceases to be valid if countries do not possess the resources needed to implement the MDGs. Effective action in that regard must mean greater reliance on the imagination, a bolder approach and more cooperation.

The call by some nations whose economies, like that of the Dominican Republic, can be considered as emerging, for a debt swap programme to help achieve the MDGs makes sense in such a context. The programme would follow guidelines recently set out by the Government of Spain, aimed at contributing to the human development of Ibero-American member countries by carrying out educational and cultural programmes to replace the debt owed by those countries to Spain.

A fundamental responsibility of Governments is to have public policies that promote macroeconomic stability, stimulate investment and create a reliable, predictable legal and institutional environment.

We are satisfied with what we have achieved in this regard, given that, in slightly more than one year, the Dominican Republic has begun to be well on the way to recovery.

In conclusion, I should like to say is that, after so many efforts to stabilize our national economy, and after the various actions undertaken to fulfil our commitment in respect of the MDGs, we have been affected by a particularly dramatic misfortune, namely, the rise in oil prices on the international market. Nothing could be more harmful today to the effective performance of the world economy than the steady increase in the price of fuel. We know that as the cost of this commodity rise, so the growth rate of the global economy decreases. And what could ultimately arise from this worrying situation is a global recession. A world recession would have disastrous consequences for the economies of developing countries. Their international trade could become paralysed. Inflation would unleash its fury upon the most vulnerable sectors. Many jobs would be lost. Social tension would prevail, and our main population centres would fall prey to uncertainty.

Therefore, in order to guarantee political stability, good governance and international peace and security, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the San Francisco Charter, which established this great Organization, we call upon the world community to place the current energy crisis as a top priority on the international agenda.

We are firmly convinced that a meeting of this magnitude and nature can allay the anxieties of humanity, holding out the hope that the most powerful and influential forces on the planet will find the formula that will make it possible to ensure that we all can follow the path to peace, calm and progress.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): I would remind delegates in the Hall to keep their voices down and avoid loud conversations in the corridors out of respect for the speakers. I should also like to remind members of the five-minute rule; it will be necessary to follow this rule today if we are to finish the deliberations in time.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. BounNhang Vorachit, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Mr. Vorachit (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*spoke in Lao; English text provided by the delegation*): Since the Millennium Summit, five years ago, when the Millennium Declaration was adopted, the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which set out concrete measures and actions, including time-bound targets, has been far from satisfactory. In Africa, most countries have sunk deeper into poverty. In Asia and the Pacific, the region is still home to two thirds of the world's poor.

Over the last decade, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has recorded a number of significant achievements in its socio-economic development. Following sustained progress, the country was ranked 135th in the Human Development Index out of 177 countries in 2004, compared to 141st out of 173 countries in 1993. One of the lessons learned is that the gains are due to the Government's consistent policy of promoting all economic sectors through a market-based mechanism, coupled with the broadening of external cooperation so as to exploit untapped national potential.

Despite the aforementioned progress and achievements, the Lao People's Democratic Republic is still facing various challenges. These include the poor socio-economic infrastructure and isolation from world markets owing to its being a landlocked least developed country. The spread of infectious diseases, such as malaria, avian flu and HIV/AIDS, although prevalence is low, continues to pose a serious threat to the nation because of its land links to countries in the Greater Mekong subregion.

The provision of permanent employment for people practising shifting cultivation and opium-growing remains a daunting task that needs to be addressed through integrated rural development projects aimed at ensuring sustained livelihood and better alternatives for the people. Furthermore, the insufficient general knowledge and unskilled labour of the people limit our capacity to respond to the country's development needs with the introduction of modern and innovative technology.

For the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the support and assistance of the international community in addressing the aforementioned challenges are of the utmost importance if we are to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. We highly value the assistance of the donor community, including grant aid, soft loans and foreign investment, such as the assistance of the World Bank in the construction of the Nam Theun 2 hydropower dam.

In terms of official development assistance, the Lao People's Democratic Republic would like to see greater coherence among donors, in keeping with the socio-economic development plan of the recipient countries. In addition, grant aid in the social sector is preferable to loans, as the latter would drive the nation into heavy debt. Similarly, loans for economic development should be extended at a concessionary interest rate with a long-term payback schedule. Moreover, maximum benefits for recipient countries should be ensured in the utilization of grant aid in various forms while avoiding high spending on international consultancy.

We welcome the policy recently enunciated by the developed countries, particularly the European Union and the G-8, in the area of official development assistance and debt relief in favour of the poorest countries. Moreover, we are encouraged by a number of initiatives on innovative sources of financing for development that were raised at the separate meeting on financing for development. Likewise, the United Nations system plays an equally vital role in assisting the vulnerable countries in meeting their objectives and goals. However, the focus of that support should be placed on development projects corresponding to national development needs and priorities.

Our High-level Plenary Meeting is indeed of the utmost importance. I hope that the international community will further intensify its cooperation and

make every effort to attain the Millennium Development Goals. However, developing a nation and eradicating poverty requires an environment of lasting peace and dynamic international cooperation. In that spirit, the Lao People's Democratic Republic reaffirms its commitment to further cooperating with the international community in the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and in the promotion of development cooperation.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Kostas Karamanlis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic.

Mr. Karamanlis (Greece): I wish to thank both Co-Chairpersons of the High-level Plenary Meeting, El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba, President of Gabon, and Mr. Göran Persson, Prime Minister of Sweden, for presiding over this meeting.

I also wish to extend our deepest appreciation to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his tireless efforts for the realization of this historic high-level event.

Five years ago, through the Millennium Declaration, the leaders of the world set ambitious but attainable objectives, encompassing the aspirations of the international community in the new century for a world united by common values and striving with renewed determination to achieve peace and decent standards of living for every man, woman and child.

Much has happened since then. Considerable progress has been achieved in the eradication of poverty and hunger. The Millennium Development Goals were established and the Monterrey Consensus was adopted. In that global effort, Greece has significantly increased its development assistance. Together with the rest of our European Union partners, we set the ambitious goal of increasing it to 0.56 per cent of our gross national income by the year 2010, with particular attention to and emphasis on Africa.

Despite the progress achieved, a lot remains to be done. Significant differences persist between developed and developing countries. Extreme poverty and hunger are the disgrace of our century. Today, we have the means to eradicate them. We must persevere in that goal, as indeed in all of the Millennium Development Goals, in order to achieve them by 2015.

Five years ago, we proclaimed our collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. We have established a comprehensive normative framework with core human rights treaties, historic declarations and decades of jurisprudence from treaty bodies and international tribunals. Nevertheless, there is still a dangerous lack of enforcement and implementation at the global level. We must take concrete steps to reduce selective application, arbitrary enforcement and breach without consequence. Those steps will give new life to the commitments made in the Millennium Declaration. In the document we have just adopted, those commitments have been considerably reinforced.

Significant events since the Millennium Declaration have had far-reaching consequences and changed dramatically the way we perceive peace and security. The terrorist attacks in New York and elsewhere have brought new global threats and challenges to light.

In these constantly evolving times, the declaration we are adopting today is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to certain basic principles, such as the obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the United Nations Charter; the peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law; the authority of the Security Council to take action to maintain and restore international peace and security; and the full implementation of Security Council resolutions. Only through such commitment can we hope to successfully face terrorism, global pandemics, extreme poverty, natural disasters, weapons of mass destruction, transnational organized crime, massive human rights violations and other scourges of our world.

This year, we celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of our Organization, which, built for a different era, has to adapt in order to be effective in the new international environment. The United Nations, the only truly global institution of humanity, endowed with a unique legitimacy, must respond to the new realities and challenges.

The draft outcome document (A/60/L.1) we are adopting today constitutes, in our view, a good beginning on the long path of necessary reforms. It is a strong political call encompassing most of the suggested ideas in development, peacebuilding, human rights, peacekeeping and United Nations institutions.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia.

Mr. Howard (Australia): As one of the 51 original countries to sign the Charter, Australia has had a long and active involvement in the United Nations. In this, the sixtieth anniversary year of the United Nations, Australia can look back on a strong record of involvement in a multitude of United Nations-sponsored processes and active membership in the Organization. We have supplied personnel for peacekeeping operations around the world since 1947 and have been at the forefront of efforts to reform the operations of the Organization.

We should not think that the United Nations can solve all of the world's problems or that it should even attempt to do so. The type of multilateralism embodied in organizations such as the United Nations can only be one element of a comprehensive foreign policy.

The nation-State remains the focus of legitimate action for order and justice in our world. As nation-States, our collective challenge and responsibility is to identify those things that the United Nations can do and to ensure it is equipped to do them.

It is a grim but inescapable fact that our world lives under the shadow of global terrorism. I have this week signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism on behalf of Australia. We support the counter-terrorism outcomes of this High-level Plenary Meeting, including the momentum to conclude an international convention on the suppression of terrorism. More, however, could have been achieved. And there has been understandable disappointment and criticism at the lack of language on disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly given the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to terrorists.

This meeting has seen much discussion about aid levels, and I was pleased to announce earlier this week my Government's goal to double its overseas aid allocation from 2004 levels to about $4 thousand million by 2010.

But we should not merely be focusing on the amount of such aid, important though it is. What is just as important, if not more so, is the effectiveness of aid.

Genuine and sustained poverty alleviation will only occur in an environment of good governance, private sector growth and respect for private-property ownership. With aid comes a reciprocal responsibility on the part of recipient Governments to tackle corruption, strengthen governance and promote institutional reform.

Those will remain key objectives of Australia's aid programme, not least as it rises to meet the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS, and the re-emerging threat of avian influenza, which will require global political leadership in which Australia will play its part.

There has been strong emphasis in recent days on the fact that trade barriers in the developed world cost poor countries more than twice the amount of the official aid they receive. There could, in truth, be no greater gift to the developing world than lower trade barriers and an end to subsidies. I warmly welcome President Bush's pledge and challenge to us all on Wednesday that the United States of America is ready to eliminate all tariffs, subsidies and other barriers to the free flow of goods and services if other nations are willing to do the same.

We must also recognize the high cost of ignoring fragile States. Responding to their challenges requires a new way of acting that recognizes the links between security and economic development. Australia's leadership of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands speaks for our experience in this area, which we look forward to sharing. In this context, Australia welcomes the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, and I am pleased to announce a contribution of $3 million over three years to its new Standing Fund.

On human rights and the rule of law, endorsement by leaders of the concept of a "responsibility to protect" is a significant step forward. But we are concerned at the limited outcome with respect to the Human Rights Council. Australia supports a strong Council that is capable of responding to serious human rights abuses effectively and with credibility. Member States must work assiduously during this session to inject substance into the agreed negotiations on the Council's modalities.

We welcome the resolve to strengthen the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and will make our own additional contribution to its operations.

I was also pleased to announce here this week a contribution of $10 million to the Democracy Fund. History has shown that the most stable and prosperous nations over time have responsive political institutions as their common link.

We could have hoped for more progress on management reforms for the Organization, particularly in light of the findings of the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme (the Volcker inquiry), and we support the ongoing need for reform. We remain hopeful that a formula for Security Council expansion that will better reflect today's geopolitical realities, including through the permanent membership of Japan, can be worked out.

In summary, we welcome the outcome document as a reasonable balance of issues overall. The challenge for the United Nations now is to redefine its authority and responsibility in the global environment in which we find ourselves. Australia, as always, will be an active player in these deliberations.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway.

Mr. Bondevik (Norway): Five years ago, we agreed on the Millennium Development Goals. We should keep our promises. I, therefore, welcome our commitment to increase our official development assistance.

The world is expecting us to make poverty history, to turn poverty into something our great grandchildren will read about, but not really understand. We can do it, and we must do it: by increasing our support to the efforts by the developing countries, by involving women fully in our noble undertaking based on gender equality, by reducing barriers to trade, by promoting investment and social development and by mobilizing business and civil society in both rich and poor countries in the war on poverty. And, like a good farmer, we must manage the earth and its resources so that they will benefit not only present but also future generations.

Development also requires good governance. It calls for determined efforts to fight corruption. It entails responsible and transparent government, by and for the people.

Ultimately, good governance is about democracy and human rights. Freedom of expression, freedom to seek information, freedom from discrimination — rights like these enable people not only to use and develop their God-given talents, but also to make greater contributions to their societies. Human rights must be fully integrated into all United Nations activities. I thus welcome the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

When a fellow human being needs our protection, we have a duty to help. One of the achievements of this summit is our readiness to take collective action — through the Security Council — to protect. We will do so if peaceful means are found to be inadequate and if national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Maintaining peace and security was, and still is, the aim of the Organization. Preventing and ending armed conflicts, stabilizing and rebuilding failed or failing States — these are huge and complex tasks. I believe that the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund will make the United Nations better able to take on such challenges. I am happy to announce that Norway will contribute $15 million to the Peacebuilding Fund and the same amount to the humanitarian fund.

But the United Nations cannot do much on its own. We need the commitment of the Member States — all of us here today — and we need a new partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations. We, the Member States, must take collective and effective measures to maintain peace and security and to prevent or remove threats to humanity.

One of our most urgent priorities is the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. We see a growing risk of proliferation, of catastrophic terrorism. All States must work for disarmament and non-proliferation. Yet our world summit could not generate any consensus on how to address those truly global threats. We regret this deeply. Norway will continue to seek a new consensus and to achieve results.

By their evil actions, terrorists are attacking the values held by all the great religions and by the United Nations. We must do whatever we can within the framework of international law to stop them. The war

against terrorism cannot be won by military means alone; we need a broad approach. I believe that the best strategy is to address the root causes of terrorism, such as armed conflict and occupation, intolerance and repression, humiliation and hopelessness.

These were the very tasks we entrusted to the United Nations in 1945. They are just as relevant today. And we, the peoples of the United Nations, need, more than ever before, a strong United Nations to accomplish them. So let us together live up to our commitments and make the United Nations the strong and flexible Organization we so desperately need. Let us agree to act now.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Right Honourable Keith Claudius Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada.

Mr. Mitchell (Grenada): At the outset, let me express, on behalf of the Government and the people of Grenada, profound sympathy to the people of the United States of America for the massive destruction and loss of life caused by Hurricane Katrina, particularly in the states of Louisiana and Mississippi. We can certainly empathize with their pain and loss.

I wish to express, on behalf of the delegation of Grenada, warm congratulations to the Co-Chairpersons on their election and on steering these deliberations so efficiently. I also salute the Secretary-General, who has been guiding the Organization through a very difficult period and whose vision for the future we will adopt at the conclusion of this summit.

I am deeply honoured to address this High-level Plenary Meeting on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of this body and to associate myself with the statements made by the Prime Minister of Jamaica, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis, on behalf of the Caribbean Community, at the special meeting on financing for development.

Five years ago, we came together to share our vision of the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century and adopted the Millennium Declaration. Since then, the United Nations has been confronted with several world problems: conflicts of varying kinds related to humanitarian disasters, natural disasters and, of course, terrorism. Those national and global challenges, unforeseen 60 years ago, are forcing us to the conclusion that new and innovative ways to uphold the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter are required.

We are gathered here to take decisive action on the very important issues of development, peace and security, and human rights, which will affect us for a long time to come. We share the expressed view that development, human rights, and peace and security are dependent on one another, and we applaud initiatives taken in those areas.

Grenada fully supports the proposal to effect positive change within the Secretariat and within all organs of this body. We agree that change must come, but also that it must come with increased effectiveness.

We welcome the decisions taken in the area of development, and we commend those developed countries that have committed themselves to the 0.7 per cent target for official development assistance aimed at reducing poverty and improving health and education, as well as to trade liberalization and debt relief to countries in need. We urge other countries to follow suit.

We find it difficult, however, to understand the decisions taken by the European Union concerning reform of the sugar and banana markets, which will virtually destroy the Caribbean banana and sugar industries and will wreak havoc on vulnerable farming communities and dependent groups. Those policies run counter to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, for small economies, particularly in the Caribbean region.

Despite being faced with the major task of rebuilding our country and its economy, Grenada continues to remain committed and dedicated to its obligations in support of the work of this Organization.

On Tuesday, 7 September 2004, our country, Grenada, was devastated by Hurricane Ivan. Sustained wind speeds of 150 miles per hour laid waste the country's social and economic infrastructure and left the population severely displaced, homeless and in a ravaged state of psychological trauma. With the assistance of many friendly countries and multinational agencies, we have been able to commence the recovery. But 10 months later, on July 14 2005, another hurricane, Emily, hit Grenada. Although, less severe, Hurricane Emily wiped out the post-Ivan gains that we were able to make in agriculture and food production,

and further severely undermined the agricultural and housing stocks.

Prior to 7 September 2004, the economy had been on a path of positive economic growth driven by advances in the tourism, agricultural, transportation and communications sectors. The setback in economic and social progress points to the vulnerability of small States to natural disasters and the way in which several decades of progress can be wiped out in a matter of hours.

We applaud the efforts to improve the Central Emergency Revolving Fund to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations humanitarian responses, as well as the mechanisms for the use of emergency stand-by capacity for a timely response to humanitarian emergencies. We expect that this support for small island developing States will strengthen their ability to respond more efficiently and effectively to natural disasters and to mitigate their impacts.

The passage of those two hurricanes reversed all the gains we had made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In fact, it is now unlikely that Grenada will achieve the Goals by the year 2015. However, with further and more aggressive assistance from the international community, Grenada will continue to pursue its efforts to meet the Goals as soon as possible.

May I therefore take this opportunity, on behalf of the Government and people of our country, to thank all members of this body for the kind and generous assistance granted to Grenada in the aftermath of both hurricanes. That is where we experienced the privilege of belonging to such a diverse family of nations.

The economic and fiscal situation remains a major challenge to our country and we therefore applaud the efforts of the International Monetary Fund in calling on the international community and donor agencies to provide more grant financing and technical assistance to support the country's reconstruction and rebuilding efforts.

As we embark on a new era in the history of the United Nations, let us, as leaders, challenge ourselves, whatever our national capacity, to work assiduously towards the elimination of poverty, hunger, discrimination, war and other ills, and to make this Organization function efficiently to meet the objectives of universal peace and progress.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Mr. Shinawatra (Thailand): At the outset, on behalf of the people of Thailand, let me convey our deepest sympathy and condolences to all the people who suffered from Hurricane Katrina. As we experienced a similar trauma because of the tsunami, our wishes are with them all the way for speedy recoveries.

Allow me also to congratulate Ambassador Eliasson on his election as President of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. Our profound appreciation also goes to the outgoing President for the successful preparation of this summit.

For many people, 60 is the age to retire, but far from that, the United Nations at 60 must be further rejuvenated, further strengthened or even reinvented in order to be a more effective, more efficient, more transparent and more accountable global body to serve the international community.

Our modern world of globalization demands a United Nations that is dynamic in outlook, flexible in structure, and firm in its commitment to the enduring ideals for which it was created. After the cold war, the world today is a significantly changed place, characterized by the pre-eminence of a single political and economic system of democracy and capitalism, which are two sides of the same coin.

It is generally recognized that capitalism, whose hallmark is free competition, provides the best opportunity for our peoples to pursue their dreams. However, free competition must also be fair. Unfortunately, not everyone is equally fit to race in the same free competition. I equate this situation with a patient who has just been released from the intensive care unit of a hospital being forced to run a race under the same rules with a supremely fit athlete. It is a free competition, but is it also fair?

In Asia, in Latin America and in Africa, poverty alleviation must remain at the top of our agenda to promote human dignity, human rights and human security, to reduce injustice and conflicts, to mitigate resentment and radicalism, and to combat violence and terrorism. However, as I have done in Thailand in the last few years, the progress of poverty alleviation

results from the combination of opening up international market access and self-help.

The ability to take part in fair trade is the opportunity for a nation to help itself. To encourage self-help, international efforts must ensure that free competition goes together with fair competition. The Millennium Development Goals will not be achievable simply through the internationally committed official development assistance percentage alone. It will depend just as much on the ability of the international community to deliver a fairer system of world trade. That must be an agenda that the United Nations reform cannot ignore.

As enshrined in our Charter, it is "We the peoples" whom the United Nations is representing. It is therefore imperative that the United Nations be kept a global citizen-centred Organization in its perceptions, its outlooks, its tasks, its actions and its responsibilities.

On the other hand, as we the peoples pledge our efforts to unite for a more united Organization, we must remember to be aware that the United Nations cannot truly be united as long as its Members are divided on the basis of domestic interests and political gains.

Today, therefore, is the test of our leadership. And leadership starts from a realization that we must be prepared to trade disunity for unity, narrow interests for shared responsibility, and a bitter past in favour of a better future. Our leadership must accept change. Our leadership must accept that the world of globalization and the new landscape mean that there is a need to think beyond our national boundaries for the common good and to bring peace and prosperity to the globe. Our leadership must also show the ability to respond promptly, with compassion and generosity, to those in immediate need, those suffering from severe starvation and those hit by famine, such as in Niger.

The revitalization of the General Assembly, the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council to play a more assertive role in development and the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Democracy Fund may be key reform proposals, but reform of this magnitude must be accompanied by a major overhaul of the management system. Thailand, under my administration, has gone through major economic and political reforms, which were successful only because I launched a management reform of unprecedented scale at the same time.

As the problems of the world become more complex and intertwined, so do the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations and its agencies. For the United Nations to be a global, citizen-centred Organization that fulfils such tasks and for it to remain relevant to citizens from all walks of life, improved coordination between agencies and with countries and people on the ground must be part of the reform.

But all of this requires total commitment, both from the United Nations and from all of us, the 191 Members. So, to be fair, let us ask not if the United Nations can do more, but rather what more we can do for the United Nations.

Reform is a process. Today, as the draft outcome document is endorsed, that process will begin. Its success depends on the continued support of all players and the management ability of the Organization's leadership to see it through.

Today "We, the peoples" begin the process of millennium reform. Tomorrow, through our support, we shall ensure that the process is implemented by a management that is itself well-reformed and by a leadership well-prepared to deliver us a more global, citizen-centred United Nations.

Every word in the document bears the fingerprint of each and every Member State. All of us have a shared responsibility to make the United Nations work. We shall have to answer to ourselves and to future generations if we fail.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by Mr. Otmar Hasler, Prime Minister of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Hasler (Liechtenstein): The sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations coincides with the fifteenth anniversary of our membership in the Organization. Joining the United Nations on 18 September 1990 was a historic step for Liechtenstein. To this day we consider our membership a cornerstone of our national sovereignty.

Effective multilateralism, as envisioned by the Charter of the United Nations, is more important than ever. The challenges and threats of today are manifold, and most of them require collective action based on a functioning international framework and the rule of

law. Environmental and health threats, terrorism, natural disasters and humanitarian crises are but a few examples that amply illustrate this fact. The United Nations is the only organization that can provide the framework for such global collective action. At the same time, today's world and the challenges it poses differ greatly from those for which the Organization was originally designed. The United Nations clearly needs new tools to address new threats, and this is the reason why we have all gathered here in New York at the Summit level.

We welcome the fact that the original purpose of the Summit — the review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals — has found a central place in the draft outcome document. We also subscribe fully to the underlying philosophy of the draft outcome document that development, security and human rights are mutually reinforcing and interdependent.

We had hoped that far-reaching and bold decisions would be ready for our common agreement at this Summit, in particular in the area of institutional change. No less was required from us in order to make the United Nations fit for the challenges ahead and to prevent the repetition of past mistakes, such as those that occurred in the management of the oil-for-food programme. Success on the many reform issues before us is uneven. The next months must bring more progress.

Efforts to strengthen the various arms of the United Nations system are needed to tackle institutional imbalances. The strengthening of the General Assembly, the only universal organ of the Organization, is one essential element in that respect. We must therefore restore to the Assembly a central place in our multilateral system. We are encouraged by the efforts to make the work of the Security Council more representative, accountable and transparent vis-à-vis today's membership.

The establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission to help countries emerging from conflicts will close an institutional gap. That body has the potential to improve dramatically the performance of the United Nations in the area of conflict prevention by assisting countries to make the transition to long-term recovery and by preventing the relapse into conflict.

We support the early conclusion of the work to design a Human Rights Council that reflects the central position of human rights among the core activities of the Organization. The agreed doubling of the resources for the Office of the High Commissioner will help give human rights activities their rightful place within the United Nations system.

On the conceptual side, we are particularly pleased that the Summit recognizes the responsibility of the international community to protect civilian populations when Governments fail to do so. There should have been greater advances in the areas of terrorism and the use of force, and we deplore that the Summit has failed to reach any agreement in the areas of disarmament and impunity, including on the role of the International Criminal Court.

We have taken important decisions but fallen short of what is necessary in some areas. We must turn a corner and create a new basis for an organization that has been experiencing difficulty in keeping up with the speed of global change. Work on the many issues before us should continue with great intensity and must lead to greater real change.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency, the Honourable Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Planning, Economic Development, Labour, Information and Legal Affairs of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Mr. Gonsalves (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): The world is paying special attention to the United Nations at this critical juncture in its 60-year history. We cannot afford to fail the 6 billion inhabitants of planet Earth. It cannot be business as usual. Tired diplomatic postures and ritual incantations are not what these challenging times demand. Neither an arrogant triumphalism nor a learned helplessness will do. Let us be truly focused on the strategic issues at hand and work together to uplift our human civilization, materially, in spirit, and in peaceful solidarity. Let not the humbug of vanity, lodged in personal, institutional or national spaces, encumber us in our collective quest for a better world.

As my country sees it, this High-level Plenary Meeting is required to work urgently and diligently on a threefold agenda: first, to advance the development agenda in practical terms focusing on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and beyond them to work to achieve a sustainable condition based on the principles of solidarity, complementarity, equity, and

humanity's ennoblement; secondly, to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the management of fundamental global economic, security, social and political issues touching and concerning mankind; and, thirdly, to redress appropriately the systemic problems in international trade, international finance, money and technology transfers, financing for development, and global decision-making, in such a manner as to reflect the apt, time-honoured principles of justice, equity, democracy, transparency, accountability and inclusiveness.

It is surely unacceptable for so many of the world's richest nations to make repeated pledges of increased official development assistance (ODA) and then break them routinely, with impunity. Those rich countries are failing woefully to meet their own solemnly declared targets of ODA amounting to 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product. Further, ODA is often delivered in a one-sided and discretionary way — as distinct from a juridically based manner — that can be, and frequently is, insulting to the dignity of the donors and the recipients alike. Moreover, the assistance winds its way to the recipient country at a snail's pace, and through labyrinthine procedures, which evince a certain parsimony, and even cruelty.

At the same time, those developing countries that fail and/or refuse to embrace an active constitutionalism, day-to-day democratic practices, good governance, and internationally accepted norms of political behaviour and political hygiene, have little right to complain about the donor's indifference to them. Everyone must get his or her act together and come to the table with clean hands.

It is evident that — principally due to the unequal and unfair system of international trade, the dominant neoliberal economic arrangements globally, the damning neglect of poor countries by many rich ones, the ravages of nature, and poor governance in many developing countries — progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals has been significantly retarded. That awful state of affairs demands appropriate action all around. Excellent ideas for progress exist but their implementation awaits more frustratingly distant days. At this meeting, the appropriate lead must be taken. It is the central obligation of our times. It is a great cause, and great causes have never been won by hesitant men and women.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is well on th way towards achieving the central MDGs. Indeed several of them have been accomplished and surpassed

Yet, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remain extremely vulnerable due to its small size, limite resources, the insufficiency of its economi diversification, its huge dependence on exports and th awesome impact of natural disasters. This vulnerabilit is currently being further stretched by the threat to ou banana industry as a consequence of the changin market regime and altered market conditions in Europ and by the massive increase in the price of o internationally. I call on the United Nations and it Member States to heed the plight of the poor banan farmers and workers in the Caribbean. Specifically, urge our dear friends the Latin American countries, th European Union, the United States of America and th African Caribbean and Pacific group to work togethe towards a negotiated settlement of this most importan issue.

I am obliged to applaud President Hugo Cháve of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for his timel Petrocaribe initiative on the export of oil an associated energy products on very favourable terms t the Caribbean. This is an excellent example of South South cooperation and good-neighbourliness. resonates with the spirit of Franklin Roosevelt an Simon Bolívar.

The international community has an obligation t assist the Caribbean Community, especially the poore and more vulnerable countries like Saint Vincent an the Grenadines in meeting their central challenges.

While we are pleased to have an outcom document for this summit, we are profoundl disappointed that there has been a derailing of certai satisfactory arrangements previously agreed upon b this Organization over the past months for achieving more secure world, free from want, free from fear, an with the freedom to live in dignity. There has bee insufficient boldness in the admirable quest to refor the structure of the United Nations system.

Over the past year, the list of tragedies arisin from nature or human conduct has grown longer tha usual. In the Caribbean, Hurricane Ivan laid Grenada t waste. Enormous international assistance is still neede for that country. Meanwhile, Haiti continues to blee under an undemocratic and cynical rule that doe

nothing to reduce poverty. Hurricane Katrina's victims, too, are in our thoughts, prayers and actions.

Finally, the tensions and the contradictions within the international political system cry out for reconciliation, if not resolution. People the world over are watching and waiting on us all to produce tangible results that touch their lives for the better. The United Nations is their beacon of hope; it is their light. Let the brightness of that light illuminate but not blind. This humble voice from a small place so pleads!

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Right Honourable Paul Martin, Prime Minister of Canada.

Mr. Martin (Canada): The international response to the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina reminds us once again that there are connections between people that have nothing to do with a common language, race or creed and everything to do with the most fundamental considerations of what it means to be a human being, what it means to be a person with rights, needs and responsibilities towards others. This is indeed one world.

(*spoke in French*)

Moreover, the document "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005) is eloquent in that regard: security, development and human rights, the three pillars of human freedom, are not abstract concepts. It is thus our responsibility and that of all agencies and Members of the United Nations to achieve them.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada cannot conceive of the world succeeding without the United Nations. But make no mistake: the United Nations needs reform. I want to talk today about security, development and human rights within the context of that need for reform.

Security represents the protection of life and thus is the basis for everything we do. That is why our discussions of Security Council reform are so important, and why there has long been an argument that the Security Council should be more representative. We agree. But we believe it is even more important that the Council be effective. Too often, permanent members have used the veto — real or threatened — to prevent effective action. Too often, we have debated the finer points of language while innocent people continue to die. Darfur is only the latest example.

Clearly, we need expanded guidelines for Security Council action. The responsibility to protect is one such guideline. It seeks rules to protect the innocent against appalling assaults on their life and on their dignity. It does not bless unilateral action. To the contrary, it stands for clear, multilaterally agreed criteria concerning what the international community should do when civilians are at risk.

The "responsibility to protect" is a powerful norm of international behaviour. And this week, we have taken a very important step towards that end. We are proud of the responsibility to protect and of its Canadian lineage. We are proud that it is now a principle for all the world. That being said, our collective responsibility does not end there. I would have hoped that we could have now agreed to make the new Peacebuilding Commission operational. Building the peace is a huge undertaking, and to do it well, we need to bring order out of chaos.

(*spoke in French*)

That leads me to the second pillar: economic development. Here, the record is far from brilliant. Donor countries must do more, and we have begun to do so. But our policies most also be more consistent. What good comes from lamenting the lot of the poor while seeking to sell the maximum number of weapons to as many developing countries as possible? How can we preach the virtues of free trade while denying least developed countries access to our markets?

(*spoke in English*)

Developing countries must do more as well. True development will not take place until local populations have the confidence to invest their own resources in making a better future for themselves. They will gain such confidence only when they see their Governments investing in areas that make a tangible difference in their own lives — not disproportionate military expenditures, but investments in health, in education, in good governance and in creating an environment that frees up the entrepreneurial spirit that exists in all our countries.

We want to see the world through the eyes of the people we are trying to help, and we must meet benchmarks that matter to them. How many more infants have been vaccinated this year compared with

last? How many more children can read and write? How secure is a family's title to its land? How many small businesses have survived for more than three years?

Let me turn now to the third pillar of the United Nations: respect for human rights. Our reform efforts will ultimately fail unless they are grounded in respect for individuals: respect for their rights; respect for their cultures, traditions and beliefs; and respect for their opinions, dissenting or not.

Respect for human rights is the living heart of democracy, the key to unlocking the potential of every person to contribute to his or her own welfare and to the prosperity and security of his or her own community. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has a serious credibility problem. Its membership, its increasing politicization and its overall lack of effectiveness at tackling human rights violations around the world have overwhelmed its achievements.

We need a standing body at a higher level in the United Nations system — one that is commensurate with the importance of human rights. That is why we support the proposal for an effective human rights council. I cannot disguise Canada's profound disappointment that we were not able to agree at this summit on all of the elements required to make such a council operational. Let me assure members that Canada will not cease actively to promote bringing into being a standing council with credible membership criteria. In the meantime, we welcome the universal endorsement of the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, and our collective decision to double the resources available to her Office.

I have talked about the three pillars. Each poses its own unique challenges. But there is also one element common to all three: we need new and innovative approaches to global challenges — approaches to which every country contributes and as a result of which every country shares in the benefits.

A striking example of that is climate change. This November, Canada will host the United Nations Conference on Climate Change. Our goal is clear: climate change is real, and the world must recognize it; human activity is a defining cause, and the world must act on it.

(*spoke in French*)

Our mandate in Montreal will be twofold: first, the signatories of the Kyoto accord must build on it by making further progress on the commitments already undertaken; then, in order to achieve genuine and substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, we must work on creating a global regime.

As the Secretary-General has observed, the United Nations is at a crossroads. If United Nations reform is to be lasting and effective, the Organization must thoroughly reform its administration and its management methods, and create verification mechanisms with more muscle. Such reform is crucial. We want to work with other Member States and with the Secretary-General to ensure that this session of the General Assembly endorses a set of reforms that meet the requirements of the twenty-first century.

(*spoke in English*)

Let me simply say in conclusion that the status quo and, too often, the empty rhetoric must make way here for a new, effective and pragmatic multilateralism measured by concrete results. Our citizens want security based on international law. They want opportunity based on more effective aid. They want empowerment based on respect for human rights. And they want a clean environment. Those are not utopian dreams; they are among the most urgent challenges we face as a world. All of us here — representatives — are national leaders. In today's world, we cannot serve our own interests well unless we rise above narrow national interests. If we fail to act responsibly on the world stage, we will fail our own people at home.

It is one world. That simple statement finds its most profound expression here, in our hopes for the United Nations. We face difficult decisions, but with courage and vision we can build a United Nations for the future, a United Nations that serves all the world's people, because that is the best way to serve every single one of us.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Andranik Margaryan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia.

Mr. Margaryan (Armenia) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like first of all to congratulate Mr. Jan Eliasson on his election as President of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

Five years have passed since heads of State or Government adopted the Millennium Declaration here in the General Assembly, thereby committing themselves to attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). By signing on to the Millennium Declaration, Armenia included the development goals in its long-term strategy programmes. With the assistance of various international organizations, in August 2003 the Armenian Government adopted a strategic poverty reduction programme.

That programme includes measures aimed at achieving the MDGs and in keeping with the development strategy of our country. It takes our specific national characteristics into account and enjoys broad support from both civil society and international organizations.

Terrorism remains the greatest threat to humankind. Acts of terrorism — in the United States on 11 September 2001, in Beslan, in Madrid, in London and in other parts of the world — make it clear that States must act in close cooperation, uniting their efforts to combat that scourge. Armenia strongly condemns terrorism in all its manifestations.

We welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General aimed at preventing acts of genocide in the future. In this connection, I would like in particular to underline the importance of including, in the outcome document of the summit, the concept of the responsibility to protect populations against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

The international community must make every effort to prevent genocide. Armenians, as a people who experienced the first genocide of the twentieth century, know full well the horror of genocide.

One of the guarantees of security and stability in our region is the peaceful settlement of regional conflicts. Armenia remains committed to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. The people of Nagorny Karabakh have exercised their right to self-determination, in accordance with the principles of international law, just as that right has been exercised in recent years by certain countries represented here. We are convinced that only mutual respect and tolerance and the will to recognize historical truth will secure peaceful and good-neighbourly relations in our region.

Regional cooperation is extremely important in building mutual trust in the southern Caucasus. Unfortunately, that is hampered by the embargo imposed on Armenia, as well as by the unwillingness of some countries in our region to engage in such cooperation.

Armenia supports efforts to reform the United Nations, especially those aimed at enhancing and strengthening the role of the General Assembly, creating a Human Rights Council and increasing the effectiveness of the working methods of the Security Council. We are convinced that a reformed United Nations will be able to withstand successfully the ever-increasing challenges of our modern-day world.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Maatia Toafa, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Labour of Tuvalu.

Mr. Toafa (Tuvalu): The people of Tuvalu extend their deepest sympathy to the people and the Government of the United States of America on the tragic loss they have suffered as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Our thoughts and prayers are with them as they recover from the calamitous effects of the disaster.

We are meeting together, in this great Assembly Hall of the United Nations, because we are confronted with enormous challenges and because we have been entrusted by all of our citizens with the task of collectively agreeing on actions to address those challenges.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been set as an ambitious pathway for eradicating poverty — a pathway that should also lead to ensuring long-term sustainable development, peace and security in all countries of the world.

Tuvalu commends the extensive reports on the achievement of this pathway and the work on the outcome document for the High-level Plenary Meeting. We sincerely thank the outgoing General Assembly President, Mr. Jean Ping, for his sterling leadership in preparing the document for our summit.

There is no doubt that much has been achieved over the past five years. The goodwill of the international community to complement national efforts in this process is greatly appreciated.

However, much more remains to be done. As we have observed, the poverty statistics in many regions are discouraging, particularly with regard to sanitation, access to safe drinking water, child mortality, childcare, environmental degradation and access to basic quality education. There is also a need to improve access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, particularly in relation to maternal health and HIV/AIDS.

In many least developed countries, including Tuvalu, the achievement of the MDGs is not on course. We are hampered by a lack of access to financial and technical assistance, a lack of human and infrastructural capacity and, unfortunately, a lack of attention and coordination. The least developed countries need financial and technical assistance, and we therefore appeal for full and effective implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries.

Tuvalu supports the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report, "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005), relating to the importance of global security. But in focusing on that issue we cannot allow unilateralist political agendas to divert attention from other security issues and the main MDG task of eradicating poverty. Global security must be advanced on a multilateral and multidimensional basis. We must focus attention on poverty eradication and sustainable development, as these tasks are fundamental if we are to ensure global peace and security and human rights for all.

Tuvalu supports the reforms proposed for the United Nations, including the expansion of the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Security Council and the review of the Council's working methods and the rationalization of the General Assembly's work. We reaffirm our view that Japan, Germany, Brazil and India should be considered for permanent membership in an expanded Council. We also support the call for the establishment of a Human Rights Council in recognition of the centrality of human rights as a founding pillar among the ideals of the United Nations.

There is a much broader security issue, relating to environmental security. As we live in a very fragile island environment, our long-term security and sustainable development are closely linked to the issues of climate change, the preservation of biodiversity and the management of our limited forests and water resources.

As witnessed the world over, a natural disaster such as a cyclone, made worse by the effects of climate change, can have a devastating effect on economies and lives. For Tuvalu, the effects are frightening. Those are the security issues to which we believe the United Nations should be paying more attention.

Small island developing States such as Tuvalu face a number of other unique challenges, which are well-acknowledged and highlighted in the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The full and effective implementation of the Strategy is key to those States attaining the MDGs and sustainable development.

We are making every effort to ensure our own sustainable development. Last year, my Government held a national conference to map out a national development strategy based on the principles of sustainable development and closely linked to the Millennium Development Goals. The strategy document that resulted from that conference, called Te Kakeega II, provides my Government with a good assessment of the progress made in meeting the MDGs and of what further action is needed.

But there are global issues that are beyond our control, on which Tuvalu needs the supporting hand of regional bodies in the Pacific and of the international community. There is also great need of a physical presence of the United Nations in isolated small island developing States such as Tuvalu, and we call for the Secretariat to give special consideration to that need. We are hopeful that this Summit's draft outcome document will be the vehicle needed to further advance our efforts to reach the MDGs and ensure sustainable development.

Finally, the achievement of the MDGs is not possible without the full participation of all development partners. Recognizing the contribution of the Republic of China to international development and noting its economic and democratic reforms, we support its inclusion as a partner in our joint collaborative efforts and as a United Nations Member.

God bless the United Nations. God bless Tuvalu.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mari Bin Almude Alkatiri, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Alkatiri (Timor-Leste): At the outset, I would like to express the solidarity of the Timorese people with the victims of Hurricane Katrina and with the people and the Government of the United States.

It is my great pleasure to be here today to share with the Assembly the progress and the steps taken so far in Timor-Leste to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The history of Timor-Leste has shown us that the spirit and dedication of the Timorese people are not easily defeated. The fundamental values of peace, security and freedom ensured by the United Nations are also held dearly by the Timorese, reflecting our strength in building Timor-Leste to become a strong and sustainable nation. In these three short years as a sovereign country, we have made significant progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Health, education, gender equality and good governance remain among the key priorities of the Government of Timor-Leste. Our Constitution expressly states the need for the family, the community and the State to provide special protection for children and recognizes the child as an individual entitled to special individual rights. It also affirms the child's entitlement to the rights enshrined in international treaties and conventions ratified by Timor-Leste in December 2002.

The Government continues to prioritize the social sectors, in line with the great interest expressed by our citizens during the process of developing our national development plan. The country's health indicators are the lowest in East Asia. The Government is making efforts to procure and ensure the distribution to all health facilities of essential drugs and equipment for antenatal and postnatal care and for the effective management of childhood illnesses. My Government has adopted a reproductive health policy that aims to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality through social mobilization to increase the use of health services by pregnant women and to promote vaccination against maternal and neonatal tetanus. Over the past decade, the infant mortality rate has been reduced from 126 to 60 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Since 2000, the Government has been able to implement four school years at all levels of the educational ladder. Schooling has been extended to more than three quarters of the 285,000 school age children in the country. Currently operational projects address grass-roots needs in education. These include the training of school principals and teachers; the development of active, participatory learning; the promotion of accountability, democratic decision-making and transparency through the effective utilization of the school budget; the establishment of parent-teacher associations; and the development of models for school-based management.

An education management information system has been established; it contains information on approximately 90 per cent of all primary schools in Timor-Leste. The Government is focusing on skills education for adolescents and preventive HIV/AIDS education. That strengthens the capacities of young people, communities and service providers, thus ensuring informed decision-making and appropriate skills, which contributes to the prevention of HIV infection among young people both in and out of school. Also, a national youth policy is being developed by the Government with the support of UNICEF and the World Bank.

Good governance is also a priority of Timor-Leste. Transparency and accountability are two important factors for democracy. They also enable citizens to participate actively in the country's development. Timor-Leste has taken measures to prevent corruption and mismanagement. My Government and our people are fully committed to ensuring that resources are used as efficiently as possible. A petroleum fund, aimed at managing and avoiding corruption and the mismanagement of revenues from oil and gas, has been established, following wide consultation with civil society and the most important institutions of the country.

The Provedor for Human Rights and Justice — the Ombudsman — has been sworn in and has launched his initiatives for the current year. The Office of the Inspector General has launched a website with summary reports of its investigations, underlining the Government's dedication to transparency. This is another institution that promotes transparency and prevents corruption.

The Government of Timor-Leste has taken measures aimed at improving the justice system in order to ensure access to justice for all and to prevent

impunity from taking root. With the new Civil Service Act in place, we are working hard to instil values of excellence and integrity.

Gender equality is a principle that is promoted widely in the country. More than one third of the seats in our National Parliament and one quarter of Government posts are held by women, as is the case with other important institutions, and, for the first time, women head up community-level authority structures.

Timor-Leste is aware of the need for and importance of international and regional cooperation in contributing to peace, stability and economic development in the world. It is in this context that we are a member of the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and other international and regional organizations.

We are also aware that to reach the Millennium Development Goals we must have the capacity to execute the programmes aimed at reaching those Goals. So, institutional building is of paramount importance.

Finally, I would like to express, on behalf of the Timorese people and on my own account, our sincere gratitude to His Excellency the Secretary-General, our friend Kofi Annan, for the support that he has given to our people.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Carlos Gomes, Jr., Prime Minister of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Gomes (Guinea-Bissau) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation from French text provided by the delegation*): First and foremost, I would like to reiterate to the Government and the people of the United States our sympathy on the loss of human lives and the enormous material damage caused by Hurricane Katrina.

Five years after the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, and at a time when we are celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, we still have doubts and questions about the real possibility of poor countries attaining the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We also have questions about the existence of a real and effective partnership between rich countries and the most underprivileged, as well as about whether there exists an unequivocal political will on the part of the international community to respect commitments it has made.

Consideration of the very slow steps taken so far forces us to recognize that much has yet to be done to act upon the decisions taken over the past decade. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his timely initiative to organize this High-level Meeting to take stock of progress made on the commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration, and for the concrete, realistic and constructive proposals that he has submitted for consideration and approval by Member States to improve and to strengthen our Organization as well as its role in a world confronted with old and new challenges, such as international terrorism.

The draft outcome document submitted for approval to this High-level Meeting is the fruit of commendable and concerted effort under the exemplary and effective guidance of the outgoing President of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping. While there is room for improvement, the document offers some courageous and innovative solutions that are within reach, as long as the international shows the interest.

However, we believe that we must do our utmost, collectively and in a concerted way, to save human lives everywhere and in all circumstances where this is required. Likewise, at both the national and the international levels, we must spare no effort to guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights, the promotion of democracy and good governance, the protection of the environment and the rational use of our planet's resources to achieve sustainable development for our countries.

We are aware that the responsibility falls first and foremost to us to ensure the development of our countries and the creation of the best possible conditions for our peoples. However, given the nature and complexity of the difficulties that most of us face, international assistance is indispensable, due to the lack of adequate financial, human and material resources in most developing countries. We believe that this High-level Meeting could lead to specific decisions that would make it possible by 2015, if not to completely eliminate, then perhaps to reduce considerably, the number of poor countries in the world, to guarantee access to drinking water and education without discrimination against women and

girls and, in particular, to reduce maternal and infant mortality, guarantee gender equality and fight endemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, which continue to ravage African countries.

We all recognize that many speeches have been made here and elsewhere on the issue of development. We believe it is very important to act in a concerted and determined way at the world level. My country, Guinea-Bissau, is on the point of concluding a process to return to constitutional normality with the recent holding of presidential elections. This was possible thanks to internal efforts and technical, material and financial assistance provided by the countries of our subregion within the framework of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and by members of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, the European Union, the African Union and the United Nations system.

From this rostrum I would like to confirm that the standing commission of the People's National Assembly of Guinea-Bissau has set the date of 1 October 2005 to inaugurate the president-elect. We are seriously committed to taking into account and mobilizing our country's human and material potential to further its development. We will do everything to establish an effective and lasting partnership with all members of the international community in order to gain further their fraternal understanding, their invaluable solidarity and their constant support in pursuing the Millennium Development Goals, especially with regard to improving our people's living conditions.

With this in mind, our authorities have developed their own national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper which serves as a basis for organizing a round table on Guinea-Bissau scheduled for the end of the year. We would like to be able to count on the support and contribution of all our development partners to ensure that this event will be successful. Its success is necessary to create the conditions for re-launching our economy, for ensuring national reconciliation and for building peace and stability.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency, Mr. Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada, President of the National Assembly of the People's Power of the Republic of Cuba.

Mr. Alarcón de Quesada (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have been brought together to review the progress made in complying with the commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration and those derived from major United Nations conferences and high-level plenary meetings, but that purpose has been completely distorted.

There were eight goals and 18 targets — quite modest ones, actually — that were to be achieved in most cases by 2015. The goals are to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development.

Very little has been done to achieve those goals. In the case of several goals, there has been an outright deterioration.

That was what we were to discuss here today so that we could take resolute and urgent steps that would allow us to move forward. That was our obligation at this High-level Plenary Meeting.

But we are confronted with an unforgivable sham. The purpose of this meeting was kidnapped through tortuous manipulations. Those who fancy themselves owners of the world do not even want to remember those promises, which were proclaimed with hypocritical bragging.

What is worse, they seek to impose an alleged reform of the United Nations that merely intends to subjugate the Organization completely and transform it into an instrument of their worldwide dictatorship.

They would have war and hegemony become norms that the whole world should abide by without questioning. Along the way, with the help of submissive coryphées, they tear up the Charter, seek to reduce the Secretariat to a servile tool and insult the Assembly and the world so that the Organization represents them and only them.

In the name of what? In the name of a power whose limits they cannot see because of their ignorance? Because of a phony war on terrorism that massacres entire populations and takes thousands of young North Americans to their death? A policy that meanwhile cynically protects a convicted and confessed terrorist like Luis Posada Carriles and keeps

five innocent people in prison, punishing them because they did combat terrorism in violation of the very laws of the United States of America?

Greed, selfishness and irrationality will visit catastrophe upon us, from which those who refuse to accept a different world born of solidarity and justice will not be spared.

A world without hunger or poverty; one that offers everyone a healthy life, education and dignity; a world free from oppression and discrimination, without war or genocidal blockades, where the exploitation of the weak has been eliminated.

Although the powerful pretend not to believe it, the poor have the right to development and will continue to fight for it.

They will continue to seek it beyond these walls, outside of this Hall. Despite the blockade, the harassment and threats, the Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America and the Caribbean looms large, the result of the longstanding leadership and generosity of President Hugo Chávez Frías, whose accusation here yesterday reflected the aspirations of the people; an accusation that we fully support.

The Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America and the Caribbean is exemplary of the solidarity that brings hope to many, proposes true integration and development and ushers in a better world that we know how to fight for. The new dawn is advancing from the South.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Eduardo Stein Barillas, Vice-President of the Republic of Guatemala.

Mr. Stein Barillas (Guatemala): Five years ago, heads of State and Government met in this Hall and agreed upon a number of historic goals, summarized in the Millennium Declaration.

We are now gathered once again to assess the achievements and shortcomings in fulfilling our commitment to address, comprehensively, the triple challenge of advancing development, providing security to all our citizens and consolidating democracy and respect for human rights.

As we know, the general goals contained in the Millennium Declaration have been laid down in numerous United Nations global conferences and summarized in the Millennium Development Goals.

Those goals are a true source of democratic pride for us. They fully coincide with those outlined in the peace agreements signed in Guatemala in December 1996 and those contained in the Government's action plan.

We have prepared a report containing our evaluation on Guatemala's progress along the road towards achieving those goals. Without going into detail, I can state that in Guatemala, as in many developing countries, the panorama is a mixture of bright and dull spots.

In Guatemala, there has been significant progress during the past 18 months in the fields of education, health, child nutrition and in the construction of the institutions supporting development. This progress still does not appear in most of the multilateral reports based on data from several years ago.

At the same time, we recognize that we have not progressed sufficiently in combating poverty. Almost ten years after having signed the peace agreements and in the context of a process that has been overall successful, we still face challenges in consolidating of the rule of law and promoting democracy.

It is for that reason that we have made special efforts to consolidate the progress already achieved and to accelerate our dealing with the many obstacles that hinder speedier economic growth and the consolidation of a system of democratic government that is participatory and inclusive. We have formulated and are now implementing a programme for reactivating the economy and society, combining more dynamic growth with increased attention to providing social services and job creation, all with the aim of reducing poverty and hunger.

Our policies are geared towards the most vulnerable, including the rural population and indigenous peoples. We have exerted considerable effort to advance rural development and in these past weeks have adopted a public agenda for indigenous peoples based on the principles of inclusion and multiculturalism.

I can also confirm that our Government is promoting the advancement of the women. One example is in the area of primary education, where the

disparity between girls and boys is rapidly becoming less marked.

Indeed, our concern for the vulnerable population of Guatemala extends beyond our borders to include those Guatemalans that have migrated abroad — some 11 per cent of our population.

Moreover, we are firmly committed to shouldering our responsibility to promote our own development. Nevertheless, we also trust that the international system will offer conditions that will make it easier to combine the domestic efforts of our countries with a genuine partnership with the main developed economies of the world, particularly in the areas of trade, financing and the application of technology. We need access to markets and require both public and private foreign financing to complement our own domestic efforts, which have now been made even more complicated by the unprecedented rise in the price of fuel.

We are at the same time eager to strengthen our cooperation with other countries. Particularly noteworthy here are the Latin American Conference on Chronic Hunger held in Guatemala four days ago and the decision taken by the Governments of the Central American Integration System and Brazil to propose to the rest of the region an initiative to ensure a Latin America free from hunger.

The Millennium Declaration also refers, in chapter VIII, to strengthening the United Nations. In view of time constraints, I shall confine myself to the following points in that regard.

We reiterate our full support for the United Nations, an institution we consider indispensable if future challenges are to be met. We recognize the pressing need to adapt the Organization to the conditions of the twenty-first century. We support the global strategy against terrorism proposed by the Secretary-General. We also support the creation of the proposed peacebuilding commission, in view of our own national experience since 1996. We support the establishment of a Human Rights Council and the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. We believe it is the primary and primordial responsibility of each State to protect its population and for that reason we fully support the concept of the responsibility to protect. We share the view that the General Assembly should be restored to its central role as the chief policymaking body within the Organization. We agree that the Economic and Social Council should be converted into the principal body for analysing development issues. We support the expansion of the Security Council through the addition of a limited number of new members, both permanent and non-permanent, so as to balance the need for flexibility in its functioning with that of making it more representative. Finally, we regret that the opportunity to make progress in the area of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament was missed.

My delegation will elaborate on these ideas in the course of the general debate that will shortly take place in the General Assembly.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Highness Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, Crown Prince and Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to convey to all participants the greetings of the King of Bahrain, Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, and his best wishes for the success of this conference.

It is our great honour and pleasure to participate in this High-level Meeting at the United Nations, which is celebrating its sixtieth anniversary at the start of the twenty-first century, by launching the millennium initiative — a plan whereby we hope to achieve new prospects for international cooperation within an unshakeable United Nations system that reinforces collective security and an international order in which the choices of all nation States are respected.

May I take this historic opportunity to reaffirm the Kingdom of Bahrain's adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as enshrined in the Charter, and its commitment to the recommendations that will be adopted during this meeting, which re-emphasize the importance of the historic and legal responsibilities of the United Nations to build peace, achieve collective security and speed up the development process, as well as reinforcing the role of the United Nations while promoting human rights and the rule of law.

We concur with the Secretary-General's report (A/59/2005) that there is a direct link between development, security and human rights. We believe

that this Organization can address those needs and prepare the ground for putting into effect the valuable recommendations set out in the Secretary-General's report, as major goals of the United Nations.

While the United Nations has achieved much over the past six decades, it has faced many obstacles and challenges, especially at this current historic juncture. Indeed today's international context and challenges are unprecedented and include poverty, hunger, epidemic diseases, the serious threat posed to all humanity by weapons of mass destruction, and the spread of civil war and terrorism — which has become one of the most dangerous challenges facing the international community today, and which requires concerted international efforts and cooperation to eradicate it.

To avoid conflicts and strife within countries, we believe in raising religious beliefs above politics, and keeping them beyond day-to-day disagreements based on changing interests, so that religious beliefs or ethnicity are not misused for political ends. While politics is constantly on the move, beliefs and ethnic origins are inherited and unchanging.

Today more than ever, our Organization is in need of reform. The main bodies of the United Nations must be restructured to enhance its effectiveness, make it more democratic and representative of its 191 Members. The Security Council does not reflect present international realities and therefore should be expanded and its working methods reviewed to enhance its transparency.

Development requires the establishment of a just multilateral trading system, worthy of the vital role of international commerce. It is therefore important that we honour the content of the Doha Round, as reconfirmed by the Executive Council of the World Trade Organization on 1 August 2004, in accordance with the Monterrey Consensus.

This historic Summit of the United Nations, with the wide participation of world leaders, is an opportunity not to be missed to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals and to renew our commitment to achieving those Goals by the year 2015.

Today, we are called upon to increase our efforts to achieve those basic human goals through the participation of both civil society and the private sector in implementing the international community's Development Goals and realizing the aspirations for progress, knowledge and reconstruction of peoples throughout the world. Such goals animate peoples' hopes and ambitions for freedom and a dignified life within an integrated partnership intended to give all a prosperous future through cooperation, coexistence, and advancement.

The Kingdom of Bahrain remains committed to its principles, will continue on the path of reform and openness in order to achieve its sustainable development goals, enhance the values of tolerance and dialogue among all, without violence or bias, and will participate effectively in the establishment of security, stability and peace throughout the world.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Eminence Angelo Cardinal Sodano, Secretary of State of the Holy See.

Cardinal Sodano (Holy See) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour of conveying the cordial greetings of Pope Benedict XVI, to the Co-Chairpersons and to the heads of State or Government gathered here.

I would like my voice to echo the voices of Catholics throughout the world who see the United Nations as an institution that is ever more necessary for peace and the progress of all humankind.

Sixty years have passed since the birth of the Organization destined to implement the principal goals proclaimed in the Preamble of its Charter. Over the years, much has been done in the service of humankind. However, this Organization, like all things human, has shown signs of wear over the years. It now seems to all that it must be renewed in order to respond to the great challenges of the present.

Clearly, the United Nations is not a super-government. Rather, it is the result of the political will of each of its Member States. Ordinary people say to the leaders of nations: give us a modern institution able to take decisions and ensure that they are enforced. This is the appeal of men and women discouraged by so many promises made but not kept and by decisions adopted but not enforced. May their cry give us the firm determination to undertake an institutional reform of the United Nations that responds to the real demands of our peoples rather than to the balancing of power.

The long history of peacekeeping operations, with its failures and successes, provide a wealth of experience with which to develop means of action able

to resolve the conflicts of the future. In that context, the Holy See favours the creation of a body that restores peace in countries that have suffered armed conflict. The Holy See thus favours the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, which could lay out an ambitious strategy for overcoming the factors of ethnic rivalry which are the root cause of conflicts and can always reignite them.

The tragedies that have taken place in the Balkans, the Middle East and Africa must lead us to reflect. Our current commitment to creating a culture of conflict prevention is important, but we should also more thoroughly explore the problem of the use of force to disarm aggressors. The responsibility to protect is born of a very important political and legal concept that has gradually been enhanced over the 60 years of the existence of the United Nations. Its core essence derives from the fact that the dignity of all men and women as persons has pre-eminence over the State and all ideological systems.

With respect to the important question of development, it has be acknowledged that in recent years, Governments have taken some promising steps. For example, proposals for new mechanisms of financing for development are very much appreciated. But much hard work remains to mobilize economic and financial support. Clearly, the initiatives of developed countries must be matched by a renewed sense of responsibility on the part of the Governments of developing countries, which have the duty to fight corruption, ensure the rule of law and, especially, redouble their efforts in the area of social development, including education and basic health care for all.

The mission of the Holy See is, above all, spiritual. And it is precisely because of that mission that it has the duty to be present in the lives of nations and is committed to bringing justice and solidarity among people. With that conviction, the Holy See reaffirms its full support for the goals of this summit, and it will do everything in its power so that the summit can soon realize the hoped-for fruits and so that an era of peace and social justice can soon begin. The words the late Pope John Paul II pronounced during his apostolic visit to Chile retain all their relevance: the poor cannot wait.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Sato Kilman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Vanuatu.

Mr. Kilman (Vanuatu): Nearly two weeks ago, Hurricane Katrina caused widespread destruction, making it one of the worst natural disasters on record in the history of the United States of America. I take this opportunity to convey the condolences and the deepest sympathy of my Government and people to the Government and the people of the United States of America, in particular to the families who lost loved ones. We express our solidarity with them throughout this difficult period of rebuilding homes and the devastated areas.

Hurricane Katrina is a stark reminder of the increasing vulnerability of today's global environment, in which nature respects no boundaries. The severe impact of natural disasters will constantly remind us of the harsh experiences and the critical development challenges confronting many island countries.

It is therefore our fervent hope that the international community will be able to do more to give credible recognition to the natural characteristics and vulnerabilities of so many of our countries. In this context, I would like to associate Vanuatu with the statements made by other island countries.

At the Millennium Summit we adopted a plan of action, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aimed to halve poverty by the year 2015. This was followed by the Monterrey Conference, which addressed the challenges of financing for development.

Vanuatu committed itself by instituting the a national MDG task force to spearhead national implementation. Targeted goals have been established, but the constraining factor for us — and I believe this applies to many of us in the developing world — is a shortage of financial and technical resources. Recent reports on global implementation clearly indicate that there has been limited progress, a fact that must be attributed to the lack of genuine financial support from the international donor community. We urge development partners to increase flows of development assistance to the developing world.

I have been encouraged by the United States commitment to the MDGs, as stated by President Bush on Wednesday (see A/60/PV.2), and I believe this is the inspiration we need to move forward with the global development agenda. The establishment of the

Millennium Challenge Account, after Monterrey, is a welcome development and provides an impetus for countries to improve on governance issues as a prerequisite to improving and sustaining economic growth.

Vanuatu also strongly welcomes the commitments made by Qatar, the People's Republic of China and the European Union to assist developing countries in attaining the Goals. We are also encouraged by the innovations proposed by France and a number of other countries with respect to additional sources of funds to meet the MDGs. We also applaud countries that have taken steps to reach the 0.7 per cent United Nations target for official development assistance (ODA). Nevertheless, more remains to be done by other members of the international donor community.

A snapshot of the global map clearly reveals disturbing evidence of deterioration in human security. Political and civil strife, disease, poverty and other human tragedies have forced many of our societies into bondage. Additionally, the emergence of other new ravaging situations will present very serious threats to national cohesion; and, unless these are dealt with immediately, the impact on the global level will present most difficult challenges for us.

The prosperity of many of our nations camouflages the harsh realities in most of our countries. History has seen more rhetoric, and we must be able to transform this into genuine political will so as to trigger quantifiable action that produces tangible results. Bold decisions must be taken. Our peoples want change — change that will provide them with improved living standards, change that will bring them hope, change that will enable them to lead responsible lives in our communities and societies, and change that creates a freer, fairer and safer place to live.

The United Nations must continue to have the central role in managing this process and maintaining international peace and security. But if we are to resolutely defend the Organization's principles and mandates, then reform is essential in order to make it more representative and effective. The process begins with tolerance and mutual respect. Our attitudes must change. There must be fairness and equal justice for all. Equally important, there must be fair opportunities for all to participate in the work and decision-making of the United Nations. Justice and human rights: these must not be based entirely on Western concepts but should take into equal consideration our diversity. It is the harmonizing of these differences that presents challenges, yet, if we are to succeed, this is the assurance that is required to allow all nations to be treated with dignity and as equal partners. Furthermore, democratic principles vigorously pursued by some must be cultivated carefully. Ultimately, the approaches of the big players must be conducive to friendship, must reconcile with and embrace nations that have been alienated and have felt threatened by oppressive policies. Intimidation is not the solution. Stronger nations must show transparent and genuine leadership in engendering majority support for our universal goals for the common good of all humanity.

As it embarks on its structural reforms, the United Nations must also be able to once and for all address the contentious issues that have over the years undermined the credibility of the Organization. We must work jointly in good faith to remove any doubts about past unjust decisions that over many decades have affected the lives of millions of innocent people. There can be no contradiction in decisions if the United Nations is our guarantor for peace, security and justice.

In conclusion, Vanuatu remains firmly opposed to the development and production of weapons of mass destruction. Consequently, my Government has this year ratified the Ottawa Convention on Landmines, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. We also ratified the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. The legal instruments are being deposited with the United Nations this week.

Public opinion will always focus on our failures. We have each committed ourselves to enhancing the universal role of the United Nations; projecting a positive image of the Organization remains one of our biggest challenges. We cannot fail this time.

May we seek the almighty Creator's wisdom in guiding us into the future.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Elyor Ganiev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan.

Mr. Ganiev (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): It is with great satisfaction that, on behalf of the Republic of Uzbekistan, at this anniversary session of the General Assembly, I greet leaders and other

representatives and wish them all success in the work of this session.

Five years ago, the Millennium Summit adopted the Development Goals for the comprehensive improvement of the human condition. In an initial assessment of this programme of action, we have to recognize a certain sluggishness in tackling certain issues, a lack of intensity in implementing the obligations assumed and a lack of attentiveness to the needs and realities of the developing world.

Uzbekistan is hoping for full implementation of this document. It calls upon the international community to look seriously at the Secretary-General's proposals in this area and to take appropriate action. The Secretary-General's recommendations are timely with regard to the reform and renewal of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat and the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission. This last proposal is especially relevant given the growing trend towards the spread of conflict in our world. Moreover, the inability of the international community to take effective measures to prevent and root out causes of conflicts and crises, as well as the current confrontations and differences in our world, are of growing concern.

Finding solutions to transcend differences related to the reform of the Security Council is of the utmost importance. This body must truly reflect the geographical and regional representation of our Member States and must become more balanced and objective. The solutions to this persisting problem must, in our view, enhance the role and effectiveness of this high-level United Nations body and avoid action that foments divisiveness and antagonism.

We see no need to transform the Commission on Human Rights into a small Council which could be used selectively by certain influential forces and groups as an instrument to promote their interests, to the detriment of others.

The events currently unfolding in Central Asia clearly demonstrate the interconnectedness of many negative developments — developments that are to be found throughout the world to varying degrees. The continuing systemic relationship between terrorism, extremism, separatism and drug trafficking is clearly apparent.

Combating terrorism is an issue of great importance, and it has been the focus of our President's statements here on several occasions since 1993. We are convinced that terrorism cannot be defeated by merely trying to eliminate or neutralize individual terrorist groups or terrorists. Concrete results will be achieved only if we can eliminate the ideological centres that fuel international terrorism and the financial and organizational forces behind it, and if we can somehow develop new approaches to assessing that very dangerous phenomenon.

In this regard, we believe that the proposals to adopt preventive measures within the United Nations framework are timely and necessary in order to deal with individuals and organizations that foster extremism and terrorism. The tragic events that have taken place in Beslan, Madrid, London, Sharm el-Sheikh and in our region have shown us that we must undertake a critical assessment of international cooperation arrangements to counter that evil. We do not have the right to slow our pace, as has happened in the attempt to create a single United Nations structure to fight terrorism.

We call upon the international community to make a genuine attempt to pool its efforts to counter terrorism, making use of the normative framework that has recently been strengthened by relevant Security Council resolutions and other instruments. At the same time, we believe that it is important to examine and expedite the process of adopting a comprehensive convention on international terrorism that does not allow for the possibility of applying double standards on this issue.

The situation in Afghanistan has become very problematic. The country has, needlessly, remained in a post-conflict situation. The many promises made have not been acted upon. One very serious problem is the lack of coordinated activity to fight the drug trade, which is conducted on a large scale in Afghanistan and is continuing to grow. The reality is that today Central Asia is a transit zone for drugs on the way to the developed countries. In this context, we do not understand why there is such a long-drawn-out process with regard to the creation in Central Asia of an information and coordination centre to fight that evil.

Given that situation, the demilitarization of the Central Asian region is of great importance. Resolving socio-economic issues is no less important for stability

in the region. We must step up the process of creating a common market in Central Asia so as to ensure the rational and effective use of our great potential and rich resources.

The Governments of our region are united in their call for the creation in our region of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We call upon the permanent members of the Security Council to formulate a consolidated position with the States of the region on this fundamental issue, which is an important element for ensuring security in our region and beyond, as it would make an important contribution to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that this anniversary summit will be a turning point and that it will make a productive contribution to the development of humankind.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): I now give the floor to His Excellency The Honourable Frederick Mitchell, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Public Service of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

Mr. Mitchell (Bahamas): I should like at the outset offer the condolences of The Right Honourable Parry Christie, Prime Minister of the Bahamas, as well as of the Government and the people of the Bahamas, to the people of the United States in connection with Hurricane Katrina, which claimed so many victims.

I am honoured to address this body, particularly as we — at perhaps the most promising gathering of the international community — come together on the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations to review the progress we have made in addressing the daunting challenges that face us all as inhabitants of this planet.

On behalf of the delegation of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, I extend warm congratulations to the delegations of Sweden and of Gabon on their election to preside over this Meeting.

We are here today to renew our commitment to the global partnership envisioned in the outcomes of the major United Nations summits and conferences of the past 15 years. The Bahamas is of the view that the full implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations summits and conferences should be the priority of the international community.

We reaffirm the long-standing commitment to the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA) and welco the commitments made, especially by the Europe Union and others, to that end. We urge those that ha not yet done so to take positive steps in that regard, order that we may be able to achieve the glob development goals within the agreed time frames.

As a small island developing State which h consistently taken primary responsibility for its ow development, the Bahamas is encouraged in particu by the international community's recognition of t special needs and vulnerabilities of small isla developing States. We wish especially to highlight t serious issue of climate change and the need to ta global action to address its attendant dangers.

The issue of the reform of global econon governance to strengthen the voice and participation developing countries in international econon decision-making and norm-setting is also of criti importance to the Bahamas. It is for that reason that value the Monterrey Consensus. The Bahamas wou welcome any initiative to ensure the effecti permanent representation of developing countri particularly small developing countries, in internatio economic, trade and financial institutions, includi the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Tra Organization.

With regard to HIV/AIDS, the Baham welcomes the strong commitment at this High-le Meeting to fully implement the measures contained the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AI (resolution S-26/2), as well as commitments regardi the provision of resources for prevention, treatme care, support and access to reproductive hea services. We must put ourselves back on track achieve our goal of reversing the spread of HIV/AI by 2015; those commitments are a right step in t direction.

The Bahamas strongly welcomes the histo recognition by all heads of State or Government, the first time, of the concerns of small isla developing and coastal States regarding the ri inherent in the transport of radioactive materials sea. The Bahamas, along with its Caribbe Community partners, has consistently expressed grave concerns regarding the threat posed to security and environmental and econon sustainability of the small island developing States the region by the trans-shipment of nuclear wa

through the Caribbean Sea. It is a peril that cannot be overstated, as it threatens our very survival and way of life. Accordingly, we continue to call on States involved in trans-shipment to desist from that practice.

The Bahamas supports the reform of the United Nations. Any efforts made in that area must be to the advantage of both the Member States and the Secretariat. We support the position of the Group of 77 and China in this regard.

We support all efforts to reinvigorate the United Nations system so as to better serve our needs, including through the comprehensive reform of the Security Council. The Bahamas supports efforts to reform the United Nations human rights machinery to bring greater credibility and efficacy to this pivotal area of the work of the United Nations, and we have been following the proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission with keen and positive interest. We hope that the Assembly will be able to complete negotiations in order to bring these two new bodies into being before the end of this sixtieth session.

Likewise, we encourage this Assembly to bring the negotiations for a draft comprehensive convention on terrorism to a conclusion during this session as well. In this regard, The Bahamas recalls and fully supports the recommendation of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change to improve the cooperative nature of the United Nations counter-terrorism machinery, to promote greater dialogue and provide greater assistance to States in meeting counter-terrorism obligations.

It is incumbent upon this summit to move the process forward and to take us one step closer towards meeting the needs, hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world, whom we represent.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): I call next on His Excellency Mr. Norman José Caldera Cardenal, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua.

Mr. Cardenal (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): We support the process of fully reforming the United Nations. Reform for reform's sake is not what this is about, nor is it about increasing or reducing the membership of specific bodies to fill or save physical space. What we need are tangible results, otherwise we will have lost precious opportunities and wasted invaluable effort.

These reforms are across the board. They must not focus on just one body alone, nor be taken in isolation from the rest of the system. The United Nations is a single and indivisible mechanism geared to common goals. Reforming the Security Council is an important undertaking, but not an end in itself. President Bolaños said as much in 2004, when he noted that the Security Council designed after the Second World War to keep the peace in the post-war world is not the Security Council needed for the new age of information technology and globalization.

The Security Council must be expanded, in both its permanent and non-permanent membership, and offer an opportunity for permanent voices of the developing world to be heard. Those voices must convey the needs of the world's poorest nations and give us, the least developed countries, a sense of co-ownership. Seeking consensus continues to be necessary, yet this does not mean that we should put off the reforms indefinitely.

As regards the General Assembly, we support the measures adopted to strengthen its role and authority, while ensuring its coordination with the other main bodies of the Organization. We support the Peacebuilding Commission as a means of continuing the work done by the Organization in a field where, as President Lagos of Chile noted yesterday, and I quote, "The contribution [of the United Nations] to the settlement of 170 conflicts and in 60 peace missions since 1948 bears witness to its fundamental presence" (*A/60/PV.5*). We support the effective operation of the Democracy Fund and the adoption, as a matter of urgency, of a global anti-terrorism convention. We are also in favour of the establishment of a Human Rights Council to take the place of the current Commission and hope that the operating problems of the present structure will be overcome.

In July 1997, the Secretary-General affirmed that the United Nations is a noble experiment in human cooperation. Cooperation amongst human beings, societies and entire peoples would be far more effective and successful if we were to update multilateral channels. Globalization compels us to seek these reforms. This phenomenon is not confined to the economic arena; indeed, there is always the risk that any local political conflict may spill over beyond regional lines and turn into a possible threat to world peace and security. This comprehensive renewal must give an unqualified impetus to the mandate we

enshrined in the Millennium Declaration, translating the contents of that Declaration into deeds.

The best way to measure and evaluate this process is to show tangible results in wiping out extreme poverty, achieving primary education for all, promoting gender equity, reducing maternal and child mortality, fighting HIV/AIDS and achieving environmental sustainability and a global partnership for democratic governance and development.

Just recently, we commemorated the fourth anniversary of one of our most terrible manifestations of terrorism, a phenomenon that continues to be repeated in various parts of the world. Our debates are unfolding against a backdrop of escalating oil prices, whose worst fallout we may have yet to see. The assaults of nature do not distinguish between the rich and the poor or the developed or less developed, in dealing devastating blows to human beings and infrastructure. Transnational crimes such as drug trafficking, illicit arms trafficking and organized crime are expanding and acquiring additional resources.

Democratic governance is affected by anything that impacts upon the constitutional order and the rule of law. Against such a backdrop we can wait no longer. We must make the United Nations the efficient and effective mechanism needed to address the ills afflicting us.

Yesterday, the Secretary-General said that to remain standing upright we must support one another, which will not be possible unless the United Nations is reformed. Keeping alive our hopes for peace and development depends on just how strong our commitment to multilateralism really is.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Allam-Mi Ahmad, Minister for Foreign Affairs and African Integration of Chad.

Mr. Ahmad (Chad) (*spoke in French*): His Excellency Mr. Idriss Deby, President of the Republic of Chad, who is unable to be here, has asked me to represent him at this High-level Meeting and to deliver the following message to you.

To bring about a better world in which peace and security will prevail, we are convinced that we must take into account a large proportion of humanity's legitimate aspirations for economic and social progress. From that perspective, we have for decades now been unceasingly advocating answers to questions of deteriorating terms of trade, the debt crisis, constant environmental degradation, the need for a gradual increase in Official Development Aid and the necessity of fair and equitable international trade. And the list goes on. The results fall short. How then can we not reaffirm our need for expertise and know-how from the rich countries? Our needs for the mechanical and industrial wherewithal to develop our small and medium-sized enterprises and industries, our need for digital solidarity to speed our development? To put it clearly, we need to emphasize the need for a real partnership between rich and poor based on mutual respect.

Another way of saying this is that the essential issues we should be asking ourselves constantly — and the ones we must find answers to — have indeed been brought to the fore by the Secretary-General. How can we live free from want, live free from fear, live in dignity and achieve collective action?

That is why Chad, along with a number of other developing countries, adopted a nationwide strategy for poverty reduction in 2003 that directly dovetails with the Millennium Development Goals.

In addition, our Government has made sustained efforts to forever anchor the rule of law and sound governance in our country in the context of respect for the rights and duties of our citizens. In that connection, we can say that Chad need not envy any other country in the world in terms of the guarantees it provides of the security of its citizens and respect for their rights, including the freedoms of expression and opinion.

Having endured the horrors of war for decades, Chad knows better than any other country the need to live free from want through economic and social development, which is in turn a product of peace and security. That is why, now more than ever, we must redouble our vigilance to consolidate our stability by fighting against the threats looming over us, particularly those stemming from terrorism.

My country welcomes the cooperation that links it to the countries bordering the Sahara in their commitment to fight against the terrorism that is brewing there and to deal with any eventuality. By the same token, the question of the crisis of Darfur is still with us. Our fear is that that crisis may spread and become a firestorm engulfing the entire subregion.

My country was called upon by the international community to do something with regard to the crisis from its earliest hours, and continues to fulfil its mission of mediation in strict respect for the principles of impartiality and neutrality.

Above and beyond our efforts at mediation, we have welcomed into our own territory over 200,000 refugees — more than three times the population of the host areas. Among the impacts that can be attributed to the presence of the refugees is a growing insecurity, environmental destruction, food shortages, damaged pastures and water sources, disrupted trade and the deterioration of roads used by humanitarian convoys. The full financial weight of all these consequences of the war in the Sudan are being borne by our own meagre national resources. Humanitarian institutions operating in the affected areas should not lose sight of the need to come to the aid of our country and lighten the load that we are bearing.

Elsewhere, we are encouraged by the resolution of the conflict in south Sudan, and it is with real relief that we hail the outcome of the peace negotiations in a number of regions of Africa and around the world.

We would be still more encouraged if our Organization were to become more effective through the indispensable reforms that are expected from our High-level Meeting and reflected in a new world order — a world we hope to see that will be more equal and more democratic. Above and beyond the fundamental issues of restructuring the General Assembly, the Secretariat, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights, we note the need to establish a peacebuilding commission, which is of particular concern to my continent.

I could hardly fail to urge the no less fundamental expansion of the Security Council. In that connection, Africa is fully entitled to claim its permanent seat on the Security Council, side by side with the other continents. This is a matter of our dignity and our right to make our contribution to deliberations on questions of peace and security in our world and to the elaboration and implementation of just and fair solutions to those questions.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Elmar Maharram oglu Mammadyarov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Mammadyarov (Azerbaijan): Today is a truly significant moment in the history of multilateralism. We have gathered here to reaffirm our faith in this house and our unyielding commitment to its Charter. We have pledged to contribute to a shared vision of global solidarity and collective security with a strong United Nations at its core.

We have recognized the valuable contribution of major United Nations conferences and summits in mobilizing the efforts of Member States for achieving the United Nations development agenda. Azerbaijan considers development to be a central goal and, to that end, reiterates its commitment to fully implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We believe that the more active involvement of all segments of society, particularly of youth, is crucial in the process of implementing national development agendas and achieving the MDGs.

In the draft outcome document we have acknowledged that Member States have a shared responsibility for each other's security, since no State can stand alone against transnational threats. Manifestations of international terrorism, extremism, aggressive separatism and occupation of the territory of Member States are not the problems of the affected State alone. Therefore, prompt response and collective remedial action to protect the millions of civilians — in particular women and children, who are the major victims of armed conflicts and negligence — are imperative in order to effectively provide security for all States and peoples and to realize the goals envisaged in the outcome document.

The notorious occupation by one United Nations Member State of the territory of another Member State, as well as carrying out ethnic cleansing, must be strongly condemned and brought to an end.

This meeting is a landmark event in the ongoing discussions on reform of the United Nations. Azerbaijan, like many other States, is concerned about the decline in the General Assembly's prestige and its diminishing profile in the Organization's activities. The Assembly must take bold measures to further strengthen its role and authority, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, and should discuss issues pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular through the consideration of agenda items of special political importance and urgency. Review of its agenda and the

improvement of its working methods are other ways to enhance the General Assembly's role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. We welcome in that regard adoption of resolution 59/313 entitled "A strengthened and revitalized General Assembly".

Azerbaijan strongly believes that reform of the Security Council should not be limited to its enlargement. It is of vital importance to ensure greater transparency in the decision-making process, accountability in performance and access and better participation of non-Member States in the work of the Council. Given the non-implementation of a number of United Nations resolutions, in particular those related to regional conflicts, we attach great importance to the establishment of a mechanism that would provide for monitoring and implementation of those resolutions.

Azerbaijan supports strengthening the role of the United Nations in global economic governance and in its capacity to promote development. Furthermore, we recognize the increasing role of the Economic and Social Council in addressing the economic and social dimensions of armed conflicts, including protracted ones, through the proposed peacebuilding commission, for instance.

We also believe that in order to effectively meet present challenges, the United Nations human rights machinery could be improved, with due regard being paid to the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs of Member States and in a way conducive to their efforts to protect and promote human rights.

The principle of indivisibility of security requires a global response to current threats and challenges, which in turn entails substantial cooperation on a regional level. Azerbaijan makes a valuable contribution to regional security through cooperation in drug interdiction operations, efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illegal migration and other types of criminal activity, and its participation in peacekeeping missions in hot spots around the globe.

From the very beginning, we have been actively participating in the global fight against terrorism. Just yesterday, I signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Azerbaijan also promotes global energy security through development of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, as well as through the Baku-Tbilisi-Akhalkalaki-Kars railroad project.

In conclusion, I would like to express confidence that this High-level Plenary Meeting, so well organized, will be a significant step towards implementation of the goals and tasks before the United Nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): I call next on His Excellency Mr. Ramesh Nath Pandey, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Nepal.

Mr. Pandey (Nepal): I have the honour and privilege to bring the warm greetings and best wishes of His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, His Majesty's Government and the people of the Kingdom of Nepal for the success of this High-level Plenary Meeting.

The people of Nepal are proud to celebrate this year the fiftieth anniversary of Nepal's membership in the United Nations. We would like to reiterate our unflinching faith in and commitment to the founding principles of the United Nations Charter and pledge to work together with fellow Member States for creating a world order to realize the aspirations of humanity.

Over the years, the United Nations has become a beacon of hope for a just, equitable, and peaceful international order. The principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter reflect the true aspirations of humanity. This institution has made significant strides for the sake of world peace, security and development. It has proven the centrality of multilateralism in managing global affairs. We must revitalize the United Nations to make it more capable of realizing the aspirations of succeeding generations and equip it to overcome newer challenges ranging from the spread of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, poverty, environmental degradation and HIV/AIDS and other pandemics.

Five years ago in September 2000, this Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration, which sought to make the United Nations "the indispensable common house of the entire human family". The Millennium Development Goals can be achieved only if aid targets are met, debts are cancelled and barriers to trade are lifted, especially in the case of countries with special needs such as the least developed and landlocked

countries like Nepal. These goals can be achieved only when we seriously implement the commitments agreed upon at Almaty, Brussels, Doha, Johannesburg and Monterrey.

Terrorism poses a serious threat to democracy, the rule of law and the very soul of human civilization. It operates without borders. It knows no logic, no language or religion. No country, no person, no religion is totally immune from the scourge of terrorism. Whether it is an attack in New York, Madrid, Bali, Belsan, London, Cairo or Madi in Nepal, its targets have been innocent civilians.

Terrorism anywhere is a threat to peace and prosperity everywhere and it must be fought comprehensively, collectively and resolutely, and condemned in all its forms and manifestations. There can be no selective standards in fighting terror, as there can be no good or bad terrorism. Violence can never be an instrument of political change.

Nepal has been the victim of senseless terror for over a decade now. Terrorism has seriously undermined our socio-economic development efforts. Terrorists in Nepal are spreading violence in the name of the outdated, rejected and failed ideology of totalitarianism.

His Majesty's Government is committed to resolving the problems confronting Nepal with patriotism as the point of convergence. The Government has been making sincere efforts to restore peace and security, rebuild destroyed infrastructure, energize democratic institutions and ensure that people enjoy their basic rights in a free and democratic atmosphere. Our road map to peace includes an inclusive process to make democracy meaningful and to provide good governance for the people.

We are open to all sincere efforts leading to peace and stability in Nepal. However, lasting peace is possible only when terrorism is totally rejected as a means of furthering political objectives.

Because the twenty-first century belongs to multiparty democracy, we in Nepal are working to create an effective system of governance. To this end, preparations are under way to hold municipal elections by April 2006. This, we believe, will pave the way for national elections.

We greatly cherish universal values and the ideals of democracy. However, the "one-size-fits-all" model does not apply to people with different historical, sociocultural, and economic backgrounds. All sovereign and independent countries and peoples are free to choose the form of governance that best suits their conditions and requirements.

Nepal is committed to the protection and promotion of human rights. We have unequivocally expressed our readiness to fulfil all obligations arising from the international human rights instruments. Atrocities committed by the terrorists have seriously undermined human rights in Nepal. We cannot equate the constitutional duty of the Government to protect the life and property of ordinary citizens with that of the dreadful activities of terrorists. The security forces in Nepal have been maintaining the highest standards of human rights despite the most difficult conditions; just as they have demonstrated sterling performance in United Nations peacekeeping operations around the world.

It is our firm conviction that the United Nations is best positioned to take up the responsibility to meet the challenges of our times because of its universal character and widespread reach. We firmly believe in the indispensability of the United Nations. While addressing this Assembly in 1967, His Late Majesty King Mahendra said, and I quote,

> "My country has come to the United Nations with as much faith in its organization as in its Charter, with as much faith in its effectiveness as in its ideal." (*A/PV.1595, p. 1*)

The King added that there was no alternative to the United Nations and that the only real alternative to the United Nations was an even more powerful United Nations. Those assertions are still relevant and valid today.

It is our deep conviction that the strength of the United Nations lies in its universality, neutrality and impartiality. All sovereign independent nations, big or small, rich or poor and powerful or weak look up to the United Nations as the best hope for a shared destiny. It is, therefore, our solemn duty to reshape the world Organization and make it more vibrant and dynamic in the face of changing realities.

I am confident that the decisions we shall adopt today in the draft outcome document, including measures for reform of the United Nations, will have a far-reaching impact on making the world a safer and better place for humanity to live and prosper.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Knowlson Gift, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Gift (Trinidad and Tobago): Five years have elapsed since we were last here in New York to embark on an ambitious yet much-needed programme of action to address what at the time were identified as the most critical issues facing our societies. Our commitment was based on the recognition of our collective responsibility as global leaders to work towards confronting the existing challenges in such crucial areas as the eradication of poverty, sustainable development, health, education, human rights, gender equality, peace and security and good governance. We also pledged to take targeted actions aimed at protecting the more vulnerable sectors of our societies, providing for the special needs of Africa and strengthening institutional arrangements in support of those actions.

At the 2000 Summit, we also affirmed our faith in, and commitment to, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. On this fifth anniversary of that historic undertaking, our review of the progress made in achieving the targets that we set ourselves must also involve, in one or all of its several dimensions, an in-depth examination — an exercise in introspection as it were — of the efficiency and the effectiveness of the Organization itself.

Such a review will, by its nature, be polemical. The global processes that have brought into sharp focus how inextricably intertwined our common interests are has at the same time served to highlight the stark differences that inform the national and group positions among and within geographic, economic and political blocs. Our recent and ongoing experience with the reform of the United Nations, and particularly of the Security Council, is but one of many such examples.

Of more immediate and direct interest to Trinidad and Tobago and to similarly placed small middle-income island countries are the inequities inherent in the existing asymmetrical international economic structures and the reticence of several influential players to apply remedial measures to redress the imbalances. Of particular concern are the many issues on the international trade agenda and the disturbing lack of momentum towards the successful conclusion of the Doha development round.

Since the Millennium Summit, we have, at the highest levels, focused our efforts on those burning issues and elaborated far-reaching recommendations in areas of special interest to developing countries. Those areas include development financing, sustainable development, HIV/AIDS and children. We have also sought to give institutional attention to the special circumstances of least developed and landlocked developing countries and small island developing States and have formulated a comprehensive programme for Africa's development. Yet the impact of our interventions has, to date, been limited. We need to do more. We must do more.

In the context of the sterling efforts of many developing countries to take ownership of their development responsibilities and overcome at times seemingly insurmountable challenges, we welcome the initiatives that have been taken to reduce the debt burden of the most economically disadvantaged among us.

We also applaud those developed country partners that have achieved the official development assistance donor targets and those that continue to seek innovative means to supplement development financing shortfalls.

In Trinidad and Tobago, we have aspired to achieve the objectives contained in our 20/20 Vision for national development and have provided assistance to others in our own region and beyond to the extent permitted by resources and attendant circumstances.

Yet, as we speak, more than 1 billion people continue to live in extreme poverty, and tens of thousands die from preventable diseases every day. Only recently, we were confronted with a situation where in excess of 1 million people faced starvation in the Niger.

We also continue to face the threat posed by terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the untenable situation of those large sectors of humanity that are affected by civil war and less than acceptable human rights practices.

At the same time, we share the view that there can be no security without development and, conversely, no development without security. We are

equally concerned that discontent will continue to be bred and fuelled in societies in which the benefits of global economic growth do not reach the majority, and in a world where cultures and civilizations are marginalized on the basis of differences in world view.

In closing, we maintain that the real test of our review must be the extent to which it identifies those elements that serve to chart a course forward and ensure that the result of the process redounds to the benefit of children, women and men everywhere and not narrowly serve defined interests.

Our decisions and actions should be geared to timely implementation, with an eye on the desired outcomes which we have already identified in several forums. The undertakings and the call for effective concrete measures that we have heard in the statements over the last few days by the leaders of the world's major economies inspire real hope.

However, our political will and commitment must transcend the words that we have uttered and speak to the well-being of each and every individual beyond the walls of our conference halls. Accordingly, our actions must speak louder than our words.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): I call now on Her Excellency Ms. Rosemary Banks, Chairperson of the delegation of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): As Member States, we stand together at the threshold of a new era in the evolution of the United Nations. If we are to honour and fulfil the vision of 1945, we have to renew our Organization.

The draft outcome document will give impetus to that renewal. We would have liked a more ambitious result. But in New Zealand's view, we have a solid basis on which to move forward. In the spirit of the Monterrey Consensus, a sensible balance has been struck between the shared responsibilities of developed and developing countries to eradicate poverty.

New Zealand is making its contribution to the global partnership for development. This year, we increased our official development assistance by 23 per cent. We welcome recognition in the agreed document of the special needs of small island developing States.

The spread of HIV/AIDS calls for increased commitment through our development programmes. New Zealand will continue to advocate for the strengthening of women's equality and empowerment and sexual and reproductive health and rights, which are critical to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

New Zealand welcomes the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission. Our challenge now is to make sure that by the end of the year we have it up and running and able to deliver practical help.

At this critical moment in the history of our Organization, we welcome the fact that Member States have agreed that we share a responsibility to protect populations from the most horrific of crimes. The principle of non-intervention cannot be used to shield genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We must seize this opportunity to show that we can confront terrorism. We must demonstrate that the General Assembly can deliver results by concluding the comprehensive convention on terrorism. We must agree on the Secretary-General's counter-terrorism strategy.

New Zealand welcomes the emphasis on human rights in the outcome document. We are particularly pleased that the budget of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is to be doubled and her office strengthened. Undoubtedly, it is an achievement that we have agreed on a new Human Rights Council. But I cannot hide New Zealand's disappointment that we did not go further. Over the next weeks and months, we must maintain that momentum and meet our commitment to establish the Council during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. New Zealand is committed to renewed efforts to agree on an expanded membership of the Security Council to make it more representative of twenty-first century realities, as well as to further improving working methods and practices. We believe that an expanded Security Council must include Japan.

We have endorsed substantial Secretariat and management reform. Those are essential elements of the renewal we seek.

But for all that is positive in the outcome document, there are gaps. Divisions in some areas were too deep to be bridged, and some are serious. The impossibility of agreeing language on disarmament and non-proliferation is of deep concern to New Zealand. That absence sends a misleading message and one that we must strive to correct, given the urgency of

addressing that aspect of international peace and security.

Despite its shortcomings, this week's agreement presents us all with an opportunity to breathe new life into our United Nations. We cannot afford to fail. Effective multilateralism is the foundation stone of global order and the rule of law.

The Co-Chairperson (Sweden): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Nasser Al-Kidwa, chairman of the observer delegation of Palestine.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to deliver the statement of President Mahmoud Abbas, who has had to remain at home, given the current difficult circumstances. It reads as follows.

> "I address the General Assembly today as a representative of my people, conveying their message and carrying their pain, their hopes and their trust in members' commitment to their cause, which has been before the Assembly for 58 years now. It was on behalf of that noble cause that our late leader, President Yasser Arafat, stood before the Assembly for the first time in 1974 and delivered his historic speech for the sake of his people and of peace and security in the region.
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> "We in Palestine face today two historic tasks and are determined to fulfil them: the task of achieving independence and peace and the task of development and the building of our State institutions.
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> "The first priority, therefore, is to end the occupation and achieve freedom. The way to end the occupation is clear. It has been defined by the numerous resolutions of international legitimacy and the steps towards its achievement were laid down in the road map, which enjoys international consensus and was endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 1515 (2003). The goal, as elaborated in the Arab peace initiative and the vision of President Bush, is the achievement of peace on the basis of the two-State solution — Palestine and Israel — with borders based on the armistice line of 1949.
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> "As we strive to achieve independence and statehood, we are working to promote a culture of peace and to reject violence and eliminate its causes, for we want to build a society that will transform the suffering of the Palestinian people throughout the decades into a creative, constructive energy, whereby the Palestinian cause will become an example of democracy and progress, and not a tool abused by those who want to exploit the feelings of the world's oppressed and encourage terrorism or foment a conflict between civilizations.
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> "Today, we have an opportunity to relaunch the peace process, an opportunity provided in the aftermath of the disengagement in the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank, which we dealt with positively, despite the fact that it was unilateral, and indeed succeeded in ensuring that it was completed in a quiet and secure manner.
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> "It is incumbent upon Israel to turn that unilateral withdrawal into a positive step in a tangible way. We must quickly resolve all outstanding major issues, including the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, the airport and the seaport, as well as the establishment of a direct link between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Without that, Gaza will remain a huge prison. The Sharm el-Sheikh understandings must also be implemented and Israel must withdraw to its pre-28 September 2000 positions, release its Palestinian prisoners and create an atmosphere of hope and trust.
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> "However, any serious revival of the peace process cannot be achieved without the complete cessation of all settlement activities, the construction of the wall, and the continued dissection that is transforming the West Bank into isolated cantons and scattered islands, particularly in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the key to peace. East Jerusalem is the capital of our State. Its siege and encirclement by the separation wall, its isolation from its surroundings, the destruction of its livelihoods and the deprivation of its Palestinian citizens — Muslim and Christian alike — from access to their holy places can only destroy the foundations of peace.
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> "Partnership is the key to success in all steps, because, even if they partially succeed, unilateral policies will be only temporarily successful and definitely not comprehensive. Therefore, the best way to achieve progress is to

proceed immediately to final status negotiations to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in such a way that guarantees the establishment of the State of Palestine along the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a just and agreed-upon resolution of the plight of the refugees in accordance with resolution 194 (III).

"Upon my election as the President of the Palestinian National Authority, we reached a national agreement to achieve calm unilaterally, which endured despite repeated provocation. We also launched a comprehensive process to unify and rehabilitate our destroyed security apparatus, and have achieved considerable progress despite the obstacles that we have faced. In parallel, we initiated a reform process that will provide the infrastructure for the establishment of a modern democratic Palestinian State. We held municipal elections and have begun preparations for legislative elections, which will be held early next year, with a view to firmly establishing the foundation for pluralism, democracy and the peaceful transfer of authority.

"We have made important accomplishments in the reform and development of our governmental institutions and our financial system to prepare for the economic development project that we wish to establish and that we will work with the international community to achieve. In that context, I must express my gratitude to all brotherly and friendly States for their ongoing support, as well as for the outcomes of the London conference and the G-8 summit. Our people hope that the support will be increased, because peace cannot be achieved in poverty and development cannot be achieved under occupation.

"Allow me to take this opportunity to affirm our conviction in Palestine of the need for a strong and reformed United Nations, including its Security Council, in order to confront the challenges of the twenty-first century. We also affirm the need for compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law, particularly with regard to the protection of human rights, freedom and dignity, so that the international community can address the challenges that face all of us, such as foreign occupation, international terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, poverty, hunger and epidemic diseases.

"Finally, we affirm that we, particularly those of us in the Middle East, now stand at a crossroads. Either we achieve real and effective progress towards peace, stability, security, construction and coexistence, or we return to the vicious cycle, under the constant threat of violence and terrorism, far from the real and necessary solutions to the challenges that we face. I am confident that the Assembly will push for the first option."

The meeting rose at 2.20 p.m.